METALSMITH

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1999 EXHIBITION IN PRINT

REPRESENTING THE BEST IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN JEWELRY

MARGARET BARNABY JAMIE BENNETT KATHLEEN BROWNE KATHY BUSZKIEWICZ STUART CATHEY PETRA CLASS ANDREW COOPERMAN MARILYN DA SILVA NANCY DEAL ROBERT EBENDORF SANDRA ENTERLINE PAT FLYNN KAREN GILBERT CHRISTINA GOODMAN LISA GRALNICK MYRA MIMLITSCH GRAY BARBARA HEINRICH MARY LEE HU JOANA KAO ROBIN KRANITZKY ALYSSA DEE KRAUSS MARIKO KUSUMOTO KEITH LEWIS JACQUELINE LILLIE BRUCE METCALF DARCY MIRO HEIDI NAHSER BRIGID O'HANRAHAN KIM OVERSTREET JOAN PARCHER MARIA PHILLIPS ROBIN QUIGLEY KENT RAIBLE TINA RATH D.X. ROSS AXEL RUSSMEYER CHERYL RYDMARK JUNE SCHWARCZ JOYCE SCOTT SAM SHAW SARA SHEPHERD SONDRA SHERMAN KIFF SLEMMONS PAT TELESCO HEATHER WHITE ROBERTA WILLIAMSON MARTINA WINDELS

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cover
Christina DePaul, *La Mano di Tradizione (The Hand of Tradition)*, an Installation at the Cleveland Museum of Art, 1996, marble, granite, steel, copper, aluminum photos, 15 x 18 x 27'. This installation is one of seventeen commissioned for a city-wide exhibition, *Urban Evidence*, organized by the Cleveland Center for Contemporary Art, the Cleveland Museum of Art, and SPACES, to celebrate the bicentennial of the city.
Photograph by Howard Agriesti

FROM THE EDITOR

FRANK LEWIS

With every issue of *Metalsmith*, but especially with each annual issue of the *Exhibition in Print*, I am reminded of and inspired by the dynamism, creativity, wit, intelligence, and dedication that metalsmiths bring to their work. This annual re-energizing was particularly significant this year because after sending the materials for the *1999 EiP* to our designers I immediately left for The Society of North American Goldsmith's Annual Conference in Saint Louis, Missouri.

Like the *EiP*, the annual conference of the society which publishes this magazine is filled with an enormous number of opportunities to be inspired and galvanized, challenged and affirmed. For those of you who have never attended a conference I ask you to imagine the pages of this magazine coming alive. Picture the opportunity to interrogate some of the artists included herein, to ask them a follow-up question about an aspect of their work, to engage them in a dialogue about their influences, their inspirations, and their processes. Recall how wonderful it always is to talk to a fellow metalsmith about works you have both seen, suppliers who have offered some irresistible deals, and workshops which have motivated you to greater accomplishments.

For those who remember a past workshop with a much admired practitioner, or for those who are nostalgic for the pleasure of a classroom where the instructor and other students displayed an interest in what was being created, the annual conferences are an intense four day immersion in a similar like-minded community of collectors, producers, artists, and craftspeople.

While in Saint Louis, I witnessed students, some with only a minimal number of classes in metals, engaging some of the most well-known luminaries in the field in a spirited discussion concerning the meaning and significance of forms and materials. Production artists with a bevy of assistants shared stories and techniques with academics, advanced hobbyists, and budding collectors. Like the pages of the *1999 EiP* the conferences are a diverse collection of individuals with far-ranging attitudes and motivations, brought together by the passion to speak through metal and its related craft practices.

For those who pick up this issue on the newsstand or only subscribe to the magazine I encourage you to look into the benefits which The Society of North American Goldsmiths offers its members. Share with friends and colleagues the passion and dedication which Christine Clark and Jane Kyle have brought to this project. Check your calendars to set aside a space next year for the annual conference in Boston, and consider being not only an observer of the field but a participant and an activist. This wonderful issue is the product of intelligent and dedicated curators, perceptive and skilled artists, and innumerable individuals who give far more than they will ever take from metals and jewelry making. I assure you, no matter what your level of interest or participation in metals might be, an increased level of commitment from you will more than pay off through your personal artistic, aesthetic, and technical growth.

Finally, I wish to thank Curators Christine Clark and Jane Kyle, the Board of Directors of SNAG, Executive Director Dana Singer, the magazine's Advertising Director Susan Evans and its designers ted studios, and most importantly the artists included in this *EiP*, all of whom have exhibited an enormous amount of energy and dedication, for the admirable and selfless contributions of time and intelligence which has made this issue possible. M

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Editor Frank C. Lewis
Graphic Design Catherine Jacobi, Ted Studios, Inc.
Copy Editor Amelie Hastie
Production Coordinator Dana Singer
Contributing Editor Bruce Metcalf

Officers, Board of Directors, and Committees of SNAG
President Donald Friedlich
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(630) 579-3272, FAX (630) 369-2488

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Executive Director
Dana Singer
2275 Amigo Drive
Missoula, Montana 59808
(406) 728 -5248 FAX (406) 728-2729
DSinger@SNAGmetalsmith.org

Advertising
Susan Evans, Metalsmith Advertising Director
279 Mangels Avenue
San Francisco, California 94131
(415) 333-5970 FAX (415) 333-2976 susanke@ibm.net

Editorial Materials
Frank C. Lewis, Editor
Metalsmith
2755 North Murray Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53211
(414) 332-6375

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WORTH IT: METALSMITH SCULPTURE IN 1999

text by Jane Kyle

My co-editor Christine Clark is a metalsmith who makes sculpture. She has been working for sixteen years in a field whose four corners are higher education, SNAG, *Metalsmith* magazine, and the gallery world. Over her career she has watched more and more metalsmiths adapt their training to the practice of sculpture and, seen their work grow in confidence and stature. It's time, she told me a year ago, to take an inventory of this movement in the pages of *Metalsmith*.

We launched this issue by inventing a category that combines the name of the discipline with the word sculpture, giving rise to the clinker "metalsmith sculpture," on the theory that, when naming has political pitfalls (as it does in the world of art and craft), it is better to go for the most literal, most neutral turn of phrase and see what you get. We had no other motive than to hold up a sign that contributors could stand under. We thought such a strategy would draw individuals trained as metalsmiths who now make what the world recognizes to be sculpture. No surprise, that's what happened. Thirty-four of forty contributors to this issue have an MFA in Metals; three have a BFA or equivalent degree in Metals; one is an MFA in Printmaking with considerable metals experience; and two are self-taught makers of jewelry. Given this sample, it's not hard to define the metalsmith part of the equation: a group who, in the main, have been liberally educated, and whose craft training includes exposure to art history as well as to other disciplines from among both art and craft.

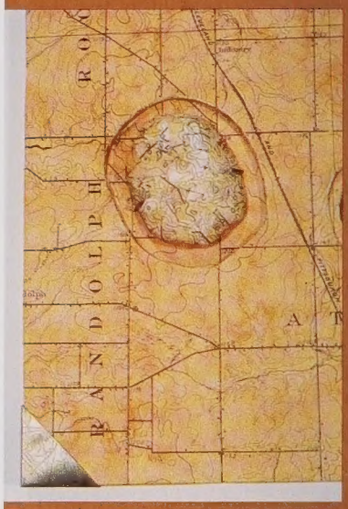
As for sculpture, all the works presented here could, if need be, legitimately find a niche in one branch or another of sculpture since the dawn of time, from the fetish to the votive statue, from the bas relief to the frieze to the installation, from the commemorative to the ceremonial artifact (although monumental scale is rare, as is figuration in the round.) The works range in scale from the hybrid jewelry figure in *Illumination* by Bruce Metcalf, measuring four-and-a-half inches high, to the 12 x 30 x 30 foot steel armature of *Sub-Division* by Beverly Penn. Of the forty works, twenty-one are freestanding, eleven on the floor, the rest for tabletop or pedestal display; there are twelve shallow-relief works for the wall; five installations–plus one militantly *non*-installation; and one walk-around outdoor work. In thirty-three of forty works, metalsmithing techniques dominate; in four, there are traces (Diane A. Archer, Carolynn Desch, Lisa Norton, Yumi Janairo Roth); in one, echoes (Janice Kluge); in two, not even a clue (Carol Kumata, Lin Stanionis). We stand by them all as metalsmith sculpture . . . .

Once we juried the slides, we subjected our finalists to a long questionnaire which, to a man and woman, they answered gracefully and with patience. We asked them to describe their training, their techniques and materials, themes and issues, their preferred scale, their influences, and to fill us in on how their work divided between sculpture and any other metalsmith practice, or between making sculpture and earning a living. Of forty contributors, nineteen hold university teaching appointments, the great majority tenured or tenure-track; five teach in the higher education no-man's land of part-time adjunct appointments or lectureships; five others combine their sculpture with a metals-related business: making jewelry or other metalcrafts for sale. Among the remaining eleven, the support system includes full-time employment in arts administration, house renovation, assistant in a commercial jewelry business, metals studio manager, armaturist for a clay-animation firm, odd jobbing and–in the lucky dog department–beneficent spouses and private means. One contributor is still an MFA candidate.

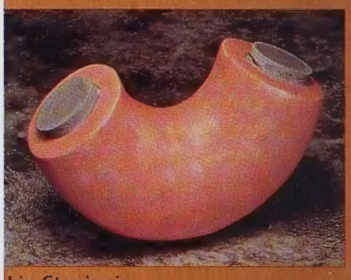
It is clear from the sample that, while sculpture is a significant practice among these metalsmiths, it is not a money-making concern. At the top end of the scale, proceeds from the sale of sculpture pay for the expense of making it; at the bottom end of the scale, down there with the saints, sculpture is an act of altruism, a life arranged to make it possible.

In a century, in which sculpture has gone from an aspiring shaft of brass to a cow floating in formaldehyde, the practice of sculpture is supposed to have been liberated from parameters. Our metalsmith contributors, laying claim to their work as sculpture, are as free as their non-metalsmith counterparts to mix materials, use found objects, think in terms of installation, and to construct and deconstruct. We asked them: "Why do you consider your work sculpture?" The answers ranged from humor: "It isn't a novel or a painting" (Colleen Flanigan) to a denial: "I do not" (Lisa Norton). Many answered, more or less: because the work is three-dimensional. Rod McCormick wrote:

> Our culture's definition is broad and fuzzy. If I tell someone I am a sculptor [they think it] means I make some kind of esoteric stuff . . . shown in art galleries and made fun of on TV sit coms. . . . Though I consider myself a craftsman, the word "crafts" carries with it connotations of hobbydom and quaintness. Similarly, metalsmith is a word which doesn't convey much to those outside our inner circle.

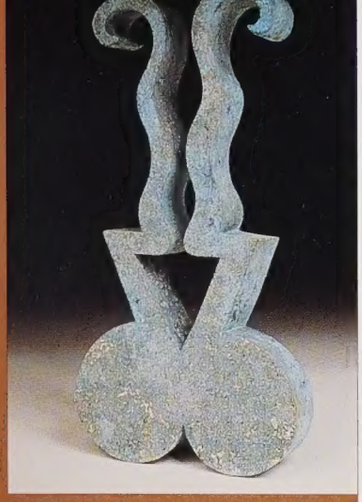


Diane A. Archer
Bioregion Wallpiece III (Mineral) detail, 1997
wood, foam-core, topographical map, photo-etched brass corners, rocks
34 x 24 x 3" (full dimensions)
Photograph by Michael Loderstedt



Lin Stanionis
Vestige, 1996
encaustic over wood, concrete
18 x 18 x 10"
Photograph by Christopher Zaleski

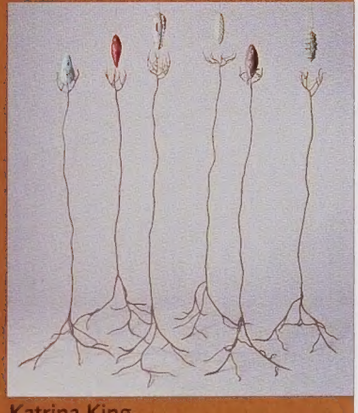
Rod McCormick
Mt. Airy, 1997
aluminum, steel, electrical components, halogen bulbs
33 x 23 x 10"
Photograph by Rod McCormick



Robly A. Glover
Flowing Venus, 1997
constructed brass, chemical patina
10 x 4 x 1"
Photograph by Robly A. Glover

Thomas Mann
Food Is Not A Weapon, 1993
silver, bronze, glass, rice
8 x 2 1/2"
Photograph by Will Crocker

Heidi Schwegler
Plastic Mouthpieces, 1998
plastic, copper, brass, nickel plate
largest: 4 x 2"
Photograph by Heidi Schwegler



Katrina King
Stories of Access, 1998
steel, copper, silver, nickel, oil paint, mixed media
metal bases 55-60"h.
Photograph by Steven Bloch

Susan Kingsley wrote: "I do not ordinarily refer to my work as sculpture because I have come to believe that defining it in terms of a category limits and restricts its potential as well as confines it within a discourse which my work contests." Robly A. Glover (with two degrees in jewelry/metals and a minor in sculpture) wrote: "I have always made sculpture. . . . It is naive in this postmodern world to believe there is a hierarchy."

In their answers, sixteen of forty artists addressed function, saying either that their work was sculpture because it questioned function or that it was sculpture because it was non-functional. (Two others said about the same thing, only using the term aesthetic to describe the basis or intent of the work.) It may be a natural posture for any metalsmith to take, given the trajectory of metalsmith education, which begins with the training to make functional things. It may be a natural posture for any of us, given the genesis mythology about craft we believe in these days, where craft is said to precede art on the time scale, and utility is said to have come first in human history–before idle speculation, or fantasy, for that matter. But I invite all of us to abandon the linear myth, which makes us suppose that sculpture, to be sculpture, needs to be across the divide from function. Let's get rid of the notion that sculpture is devoid of utility or practicum. It's an old-fashioned distinction that splits the human animal into sectors, one for rising to aesthetic heaven, the other for sitting down to tea, brewed in a handmade pot. I impose no value difference between these two assertions: "Today I rose and went about living;" or "Today I exercised my brain and heart on this work of sculpture."

One of our contributors, Lisa Norton, was made most anxious by our call for entries, fearing that, by sculpture, we meant *with a capital S*, or Sculpture at the expense of Craft, as if–by proposing this topic for an *Exhibition in Print*–we intended to elevate the work of some metalsmiths as against the work of others, showcasing Sculpture while putting down the rest. Not on your life. Even if we wanted to, our sample of metalsmiths would not cooperate. They don't believe themselves above or beyond or even outside the fold. In the main they are self-conscious members of their discipline who pay tribute to their upbringing, some of them in page-long hymns to the field appended, unbidden, to their questionnaires.

To start with, they extol the medium itself. Metal is supple and versatile, with all the literal and figurative qualities to recommend it: ductility, durability, brute strength, subtle beauty. They extol the work: metal is demanding, but the precision exacted becomes no less a personal virtue than an aesthetic one. They declare allegiance to a sensibility that includes, beyond the work itself, a history of forms, and within that history, the many registers that expand the range of sculpture to include decoration, ornamentation, ritual, science, invention, politics, and wit. Shading into language that might sound like rhetoric if it were not scientifically true, Susan Kingsley makes the ultimate endorsement of the medium: metal is in the earth, it's in our body, it's elemental. You can't leave metal behind.

The works represented in this issue draw heavily on the history of metalsmithing for their forms and themes, and more broadly, on the history of the decorative arts, whether the point of departure is jewelry (Julia Barello, Colleen Flanigan, Katrina King, Thomas Mann, Bruce Metcalf), flatware (Julia Jiannacopoulos, Jiro J. Masuda), regalia (Heather White), the reliquary and related objects (Mariko Kusumoto, Richard Mafong), silversmithing (Kim Cridler), tinsmithing (Jonathan Wahl), dinnerware and related domestic objects (Carolynn Desch, Carol Kumata, Myra Mimlitsch Gray, Linda Threadgill), even hardware and housewares (Lisa Norton). Other works draw on fields where–before the invention of the so-called synthetics–metal was a primary medium: natural science (or pseudo-science) and medicine (Marilyn da Silva, Martha Glowacki, Chris Ramsay, Heidi Schwegler, Lynn Whitford). Imagery is drawn from mechanics and structural mechanics, machining and tool-making (Jeanne Beaver, Gary Griffin, Beverly Penn, Ira Sherman). Even the commemorative plaque-maker gets a marker in the work of Christina DePaul.

In this, the above works find their form and their subject matter close to the discipline, as, for example, when Jiro J. Masuda puts drillbits on flatware, Katrina King suspends a pendant from the ceiling over a root-like base, or Jonathan Wahl makes three early-American tin pots stand tall on a seven-foot scale; when Heidi Schwegler re-makes the horrifying speculum, or Chris Ramsay crosses the microscope with the telescope and the globe. But if these metalsmiths find their point of departure in literal metal, they do not literally reprise their sources. Instead they reconfigure and reinterpret them, in the same way all artists do. Their concerns are those of today's metalsmith, although in the broadest sense their concerns are not different from those of all freethinkers of the last two hundred years: understanding the self; critiquing culture; assessing our place in nature; defining a politics in tandem with a theory of human nature; finding a purpose and meaning under the sun.

You will recognize in the work featured here the timely philosophies of our day: bioregionalism (Diane A. Archer); feminism–with a little *f*, the term meaning issues women claim as their own (Jeanne Beaver, Kristen Fogtman-Faust, Julia Jiannacopoulos, Susan Kingsley, Carol Kumata, Linda Threadgill); environmentalism and recycling (Boris Bally, Harriete Estel Berman, Gary Griffin, Beverly Penn, Sayumi Yokouchi); and ethnicity (Christina DePaul, Mariko Kusumoto, Richard Mafong). But the subject matter and object lessons of the works in this issue come less frequently from a theory of artmaking; the preoccupations are not largely those of art history or art polemic. Norton's un-installation takes issue with the notion of a pure gallery space unencumbered by usefulness.

Yumi Janairo Roth's Formica bas relief questions the modernist canon. Bruce Metcalf's style and practice are a stand against art versus craft (or art dissolving into philosophy). Yet if most of the works shown here do not blatantly engage an institutionalized rhetoric about what constitutes art legitimacy, they nevertheless have their principles, and their principles drive their work. This is engaged art, within the context of a wider world.

A minimum of the work in this issue is purely formal. McCormick's see-through lamp is a formal exercise, done, as he explains, with a computer-modeling program. Kim Cridler makes the spout of a teapot human life-size, giving it spout-ness, and brotherhood with the elephant and the god Priapus, faithfully erect. Lin Stanionis has abstracted the body to a shape where it vanishes as figure and becomes form. Julia Barello loses the outline of the body, too, displaying a glowing X-ray displaying its jewelry-like form. As for the figure, it comes into evidence in the work of Robly A. Glover, whose *Bull Venus* is a take on the Venus archetype, sculpture's first figuration, so far as we know. Thelma Coles, giving us perhaps her take on the odalisque, outlines only the back of a female figure in brass and fills it in with a drape of fine chain. Bruce Metcalf cartoons the figure, standing it as a tiny wearable on stage in a shrine. In *Containing Appetite and Desire*, Julia Jiannacopoulos cages a knife and fork and spoon as prisoners of dieting, the shapely flatware belying ideal body types, reminding us that the term "figure" has become normative in our century.

It is customary in graduate school parlance to say that certain kinds of work "reference the body." I hate the expression on purist grounds, because it makes a lazy verb from a noun, but especially because the phrase is so imprecise. As with most in-speak, those who use it know what they mean. Those who hear it may not. We can add more substance to the notion by looking at the work in these pages: to start with, largely by banishing "the body" as a concept. An impersonal, uninhabited signifier is not the reference here. But human presence is. Look around: if the figure-in-the-round is missing from the room, what the figure would stand for is not banished. It's sorely missed and very much invited in or back. The human subject animates this work, whether by proxy (the photo imagery in Thomas Mann's *Food for Thought*), as the culprit leaving a trace (the bit of trash in Diane A. Archer's *Bioregion IV*), or as the dearly departed (memorialized in the tiny silver slippers of Hai-Chi Jihn's grandmother, so painfully small for bound feet). Most frequently the human subject is set up in the work and requires a human stand in: the viewer.

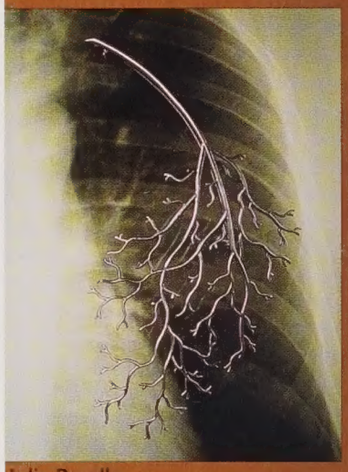
Much of this work supposes participation and, in so doing, makes a willing monkey of you. You have to go stand under Heather White's suspended crowns and crown yourself. You've got to look into Chris Ramsay's view-o-rama or clamber into Ira Sherman's *Arbitrator* or open Mariko Kusumoto's shrine. You want to put on Susan Kingsley's sexy lead shoes, your hand twitches to stroke Richard Mafong's *Executive Woman's Blouse*. When everyone clears the room, you'll cart off that handbag of chocolates by Kristen Fogtman-Faust. You think you will reach over and move that shiny steel *boccie* ball in Christina DePaul's installation (it's a game, after all). Your hand comes into play on instinct, like the many hands behind this work.

In company with all the presences who populate this sculpture, we can also count the person of the metalsmith, often self-referential in the themes of the work, but also self-aware as maker. A number of our contributors write eloquently about their sculpture as the evidence of its making. They make an ethic of the work, meaning both the labor and the product. This is not just a play on words. The signs of the work are left in the work itself. Myra Mimlitsch Gray memorializes this trace in a hand-wrought brass tray, constructing it to show the marks of planishing in oversize mode–and dazzling, as if sculpted:

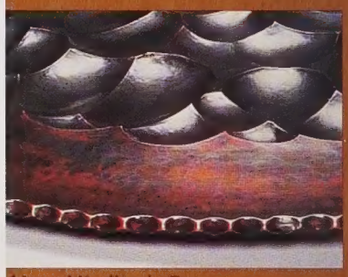
> A quality planished surface is traditionally realized through rhythmic repetition–it is almost hypnotic in its execution. I am engaged in an analytic construction of this rhythm. It is my handwrought response to the industrially-produced version of the handwrought, as seen in umbrella stands and planters available through mail-order catalogs and boutiques. Just as those objects indulge the sentiments of the home decorator, I hope to tap into some latent cultural conscience that respects and desires the heroics of craft.

At the heart of the metal medium lies the age-old riddle of alchemy: is it base or precious metal? How do we transform the common element into the uncommon prize? It is the age-old question about what is authentic and worthy and genuine. Sayumi Yokouchi looks askance at the modern way of letting rubber plants stand in for the living green. She makes a kit, a *Portable Garden*, with knock-down metal flowers, and instead of leaving the metal to show its luster, spray paints it over. It's a cautionary fake. Harriete Estel Berman, exploring the same territory, takes over the medium of pre-painted steel from its commercial source. Recycling the metal and cutting it into colorful spikes of grass, she builds a square yard of the stuff, rivaling Astro-turf on the scale of artificial. Her little flying carpet, door mat, and dream of the suburbs lie on the floor like a good little Minimalist work. Only subversive, and clever, and wry. Don't forget the real stuff, before it's too late! M

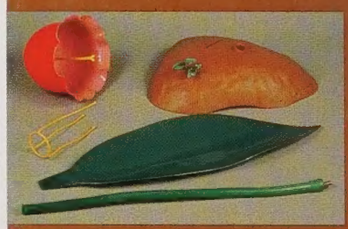
Mariko Kusumoto
Kisekae Doll, 1998
brass, sterling silver, bronze, found objects, copper, coral
8 1/2 x 7 x 11"
Photograph by Hap Sakwa



Julia Barello
Vascular Studies II: Lung Brooch, detail, 1996
sterling silver X-ray, maple
19 x 16 x 7" (full dimensions)
Photograph by Mike Laurence



Myra Mimlitsch Gray
Handwrought Copper Tray, detail, 1997
copper
34 x 34 x 3"
Photograph by Ken Gray



Sayami Yokouchi
Portable Garden I (disassembled), 1998
copper, enamel paint
12 x 6 x 4" (assembled)
Photograph by Sayumi Yokouchi

Jane Kyle is a writer and teacher specializing in the history of ideas. She is former Dean of Faculty at Oregon College of Art and Craft, where she also taught the course "Writing for Artists." Her work has appeared in numerous publications. She holds a Ph.D. from Stanford University in Literature and Humanities, and teaches in the Performing and Fine Arts Department at the University of Portland.

CONTINUING THE TRADITION

text by Christine Clark

As a trained metalsmith and working sculptor, I am honored to address a subject that has been so important to me for many years. In this *Exhibition in Print*, we want to focus attention on metalsmith sculpture within the parameters long familiar to all metalsmiths: technique, process, and materials. But we also want to show the range of work being done in our field under the heading of sculpture. We want you to see where this work is taking the discipline, to observe how conceptual issues are addressed by these metalsmiths, and to appreciate the influences and passion in the work.

Remembering back to the first jewelry classes I took, I recall never being drawn toward the making of jewelry, yet still feeling a strong connection to the materials and processes. My work took the form of objects: wall pieces, containers, hanging things, pocket objects, and the like. Entering graduate school, I seemed to make everything *but* jewelry. When my first piece as a graduate student was a small free-standing sculpture, the decision to make it was a natural continuation of all the little *things* I had been making.

The teachers I worked with in college were an unceasing source of encouragement and freedom. This was during the late seventies and early eighties, at the end of a period when a great number of new materials and processes surfaced in the field. Metalsmiths were working with materials such as plastics, aluminum, found objects, natural materials, and such techniques as anodizing, electroforming, and photo-etching. There was great enthusiasm for the next "new thing," and a collective "anything goes" feeling was shared by teachers and students.

The roots of some current work in the field are found in the Modernist jewelers Sam Kramer, Margaret DePatta, Art Smith, Harry Bertoia, and Earl Pardon. These and other important metalsmiths were working at the same time as their counterparts Calder, Picasso, Miro, Dali, and Moholy-Nagy, and were influenced by Surrealism, Dadaism, Contructivism, and even African tribal art. Working in mixed materials, addressing the purity of making with one's hands, and being personally expressive spun a common thread amongst these jewelers. Their work and their teaching have influenced many who are practicing metalsmithing today.

The influence of the modernist jewelers on metalsmiths of the sixties and seventies can be seen in their desire to make a statement, proclaim a personal belief, or simply become more expressive. Many were seeking a personal platform through their jewelry and metalwork during this time of political and social turbulence. Only a handful of people were experimenting with sculpture, and most of the work that wasn't jewelry was still functional. But, within the confines of functional work, there was a lot of thinking going on. Symbolism was used abundantly together with humor and irony. Provocative conceptual pieces began to appear, although still labeled as "boxes," "handbags," "candleholders," and "weathervanes." In January 1980, the American Craft Council sponsored the exhibition *Young Americans*, an exhibit featuring some very talented craftspeople under thirty. Many were still students or recent graduates of MFA programs, and, of course, the majority of their work in the exhibition was jewelry or functional pieces. However, a number of pieces were labeled "sculpture" by their makers, with the occasional piece marked "object." This shift in nomenclature documents the first of many challenges these emerging artists would pursue within the conventions and limitations of the metalsmithing world.

The 1980s brought a wealth of sculptural work from many metalsmiths: Harriete Estel Berman, Thelma Coles, Christina DePaul, Martha Glowacki, Gary Griffin, Susan Kingsley, Carol Kumata, Richard Mafong, Rod McCormick, Bruce Metcalf, Linda Threadgill (all of whom are featured in this EIP issue). In 1986, *Form Beyond Function*[1] was the first major traveling exhibition that addressed sculpture in metalsmithing. Two advances emerge in this exhibit: the freedom these artists give themselves to use any material or process to express a particular idea, and acknowledged love for making this kind of work. This direction continues in 1993 with *Sculptural Concerns*[2], another traveling exhibition addressing sculpture in metalsmithing. This exhibition included sculpture as well as wearable and functional pieces, and groups the work in its move away from jewelry as a purely wearable and perhaps decorative element for the body. The titles given these two traveling exhibitions, just seven years apart, show the evolution of work in our field away from strict metalsmithing and on to other concerns.

Given the number of emerging artists featured in this *Exhibition in Print* issue, it is apparent that the tendency to work sculpturally is sustained in the new generation. Sculpture has become and remains one of the many viable and expressive practices within the metalsmithing field.

[1] *Form Beyond Function: Recent Sculpture by North American Metalsmiths;* 1986; David Prince, L. Brent Kington, curators; essays by Bruce Metcalf and Gary Griffin.

[2] *Sculptural Concerns: Contemporary American Metalwork,* 1993; Fort Wayne Museum of Art and The Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati; Robert Schroeder, curator; Essays by Jeannine Falino and Jan Brooks Loyd.

Christine Clark is Associate Professor and Department Head of Metal at Oregon College of Art and Craft, where she has taught jewelry/metalsmithing and mixed-media sculpture for fifteen years. Her work focuses primarily on sculpture, as well as large site-specific sculptures and installations. She received her MFA in Metalsmithing from Rochester Institute of Technology.

METALSMITH SCULPTURE

CHRISTINE CLARK AND JANE KYLE: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We'd like to thank the SNAG Editorial Advisory Committee and the SNAG Board of Directors for giving us this opportunity to discuss metalsmith sculpture. In addition, we'd like to thank Frank Lewis for his patience with a multitude of questions and his guidance through this project, Diane Falkenhagen for her regular and encouraging telephone calls, Bill Will for his support and valuable input, Tami Dean for her suggestions and good advice, Oregon College of Art and Craft for a good portion of our telephone bill, and the artists who all responsibly and promptly turned in their materials, answered all of our questions, gave us carefully written and intelligent information, and cheerfully had their work re-photographed. The success of this project is due to you. And finally, to all of the artists who submitted their work for this project: limiting the number of artists to forty was a painful choice that was beyond our control.

LISA NORTON b. 1962

My installation, *functional things*, at Wearley Gallery was a response to the gallery space itself and began with a study of the building blueprints. I wanted to highlight and exaggerate the multiple functions of the gallery: exhibition space, school, studio, and retail shop. All the work was functional or utilitarian and designed for that space. The workshop was converted into a gallery space, and the purpose of the other rooms was intentionally blurred. The objects were placed throughout the building in order to stress the idea that objects are made for a use, and that only when modified or adapted to suit a purpose in real life are they fully realized as such.

My work derives from the idea that Craft serves a unique purpose in our culture. My work is not Sculpture, because it originates from issues, conceits, and ideologies germane to Craft. This idea of difference is vital for metalsmiths to own and to preserve within our discipline. The strong attraction of the craft object is a response to our post-industrial postmodern culture. Craft can encompass—in ways that Sculpture cannot—the notion of the social object, the regional vernacular artifact, the occasion to customize and decorate, and the imperative to recycle and re-use.

left
ganged rake, 1997
steel, wood
62 x 59 x 2"

above
Space Saver, 1997
steel, glass jars,
aluminum, MDF
18 x 24 x 11"

from *functional things*, an installation of found and altered objects
at Wearley Gallery (Royal Oak, Michigan)
Photographs by Donald Norton

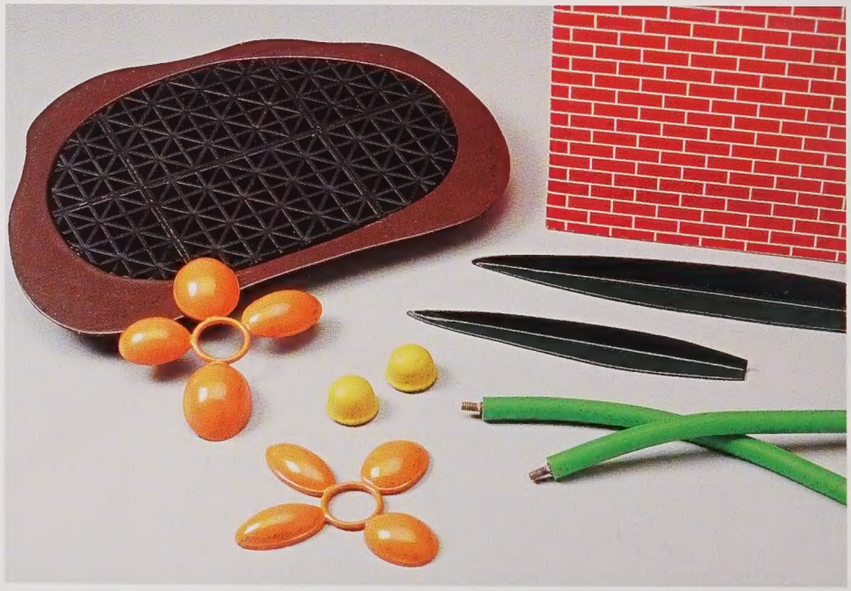
SAYUMI YOKOUCHI b. 1971

Technology and the mass media have transformed and brought into question the idea of nature. The pieces in my *Portable Garden* series mimic highly-idealized representations of nature, such as the artificial flower arrangements and rubber plants found in domestic environments. I address how nature is objectified and romanticized, as well as the idea of beauty that is bound to it. I raise questions about the cynicism of industrialized culture and demonstrate art's ability both to critique our environmental problems and help us reconsider the function of nature.

In breaking with traditional practices in metalsmithing (for example, I spray paint on metal and combine it with synthetic materials), I bridge the gap between traditional craft and contemporary art. Working with metals allows me to maintain a dialogue between traditional values (such as the reliance on craftsmanship) and modern concerns in the world of art. My work is influenced by the Japanese aesthetic, which includes a strong sense of design and placement, as well as an interest in all things natural.

left
Portable Garden 3, 1998
copper, wood, enamel paint, rubber, plastic, contact paper
13 x 9 x 6"
Photographs by Robert Storm

below
Detail.



MYRA MIMLITSCH GRAY b. 1962

While my artwork is located within metalsmithing, my interest lies in challenging assumptions about the precious, the crafted, and the domestic object. I explore formal and ideological information embodied in historical objects, and I recontextualize my findings in a cultural critique.

Recently I developed a series of large-scale trays that are literal constructions of magnified, handwrought surfaces. With the computer, I scanned hammered surfaces and developed images and patterns from the recorded marks. I used a graphics program to enlarge and map out the specific shapes of each mark. I then projected the maps on large sheets of metal, cut out the individual shapes, hammered them into bowls, and rejoined the separate forms into the resulting trays.

In these trays, form is developed as evidence of a thorough examination (as if through a magnifying lens), but the scale of the finished object is such that, when you look in close, the form envelops you. A quality planished surface is traditionally realized through rhythmic repetition–it is almost hypnotic in its execution. I am engaged in an analytic construction of this rhythm. It is my handwrought response to the industrially-produced version of the handwrought, as seen in umbrella stands and planters available through mail-order catalogs and boutiques. Just as those objects indulge the sentiments of the home decorator, I hope to tap into some latent cultural conscience that respects and desires the heroics of craft.

above
Handwrought Brass Tray, 1998
brass
12 x 48 x 30"
Photograph by Robert Storm

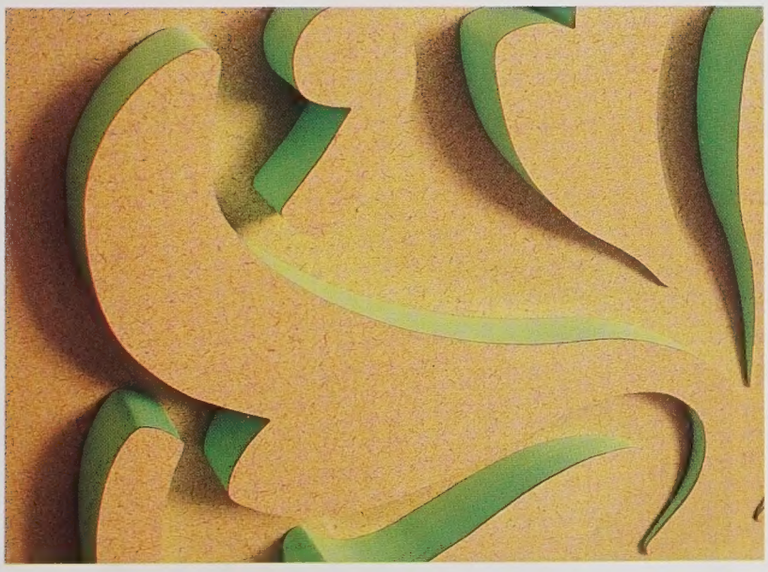
GARY GRIFFIN b. 1945

This installation is in the Rivera Court of the Detroit Institute of Arts, where in 1932-33 the Mexican artist Diego Rivera painted all four walls with murals on the theme of industrialization, notably featuring Detroit's star industry: automobile manufacture. By reshaping the concepts and visual elements in Rivera's work, I create a complex metaphor for post-industrial reality.

Rivera's murals describe the impersonal process of mining nature as a resource for industry. In my *Garden*, I propose a contemporary alternative for cultivating industrial resources. The installation recalls carefully tended sites of personal and civic life: domestic gardens or urban parks. My beds are a mulch of metal processed for industrial recycling that I mined from scrapyards. Rivera used the image of a conveyor belt to frame and isolate spaces on the wall. Similarly, conveyor-chain fences frame my garden. They are meant to convey the idea that future chapters in the industrial narrative depend on our stewardship of resources.

below
The Garden, Installation at the Detroit Institute of Arts, 1995
steel, frag, found conveyor chain, engine cast
18" x 13 x 23'
Photographs by R. H. Hensleigh

left
Detail

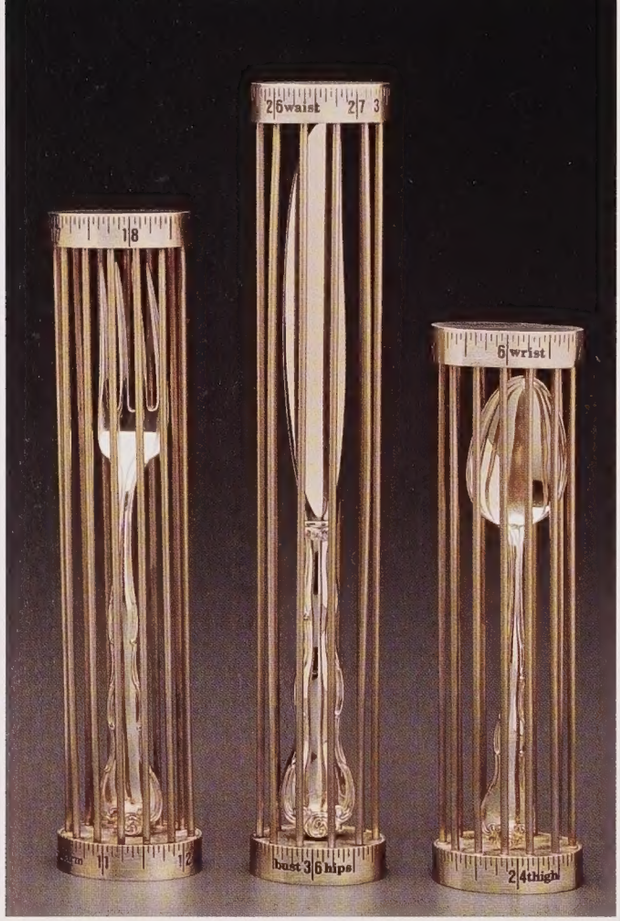


YUMI JANAIRO ROTH b. 1970

I am interested in common materials and traditional or non-traditional techniques as a way to explore the veiled morality in modern design and historical ornamentation. The nineties' popular aesthetic reveres austerity, where less is more and therefore chic. Smooth, clean surfaces (a reduction of Bauhausian principle) now connote intelligence, wealth, and class. I question any traditional hierarchy between materials and processes, and I elevate the mundane and diminish the valuable. By upsetting visual class hierarchies, I compel viewers to investigate and question their own expectations and prejudices.

above
Curry Fiber, 1997
wood, paint, Formica, brass
41 x 34 x 5"
Photographs by Pete Mauney

left
Detail



JULIA M. JIANNACOPOULOS b. 1965

I have been exploring the scale of ordinary everyday objects in the belief that we possess an emotional investment in them. In *Containing Appetite and Desire*, I represent the emotional but also cognitive aspects of female eating disorders, or more commonly, "disordered eating." My imprisoned flatware refers to the body and is a symbol of cultural oppression, as is the tape measure, but the pieces also suggest internalized oppression and individual complicity. As a sculptor, I recontextualize an object's meaning, creating alterations for altercations.

left
Containing Appetite and Desire, 1996
nickel, sterling silver flatware
largest: 10 x 2 x 1"
Photograph by Jim Wildeman

LYNN WHITFORD b. 1943

Until recently I worked almost exclusively in the still-life format, where the shelf and objects on it were conceived of as one piece. The series *Tools for Transmutation* is a digression. The five shelves of alchemy vessels–alembics, retorts, matrasses, cucurbits, and separation flasks–are the odd, anthropomorphic-looking ancestors of contemporary chemistry glass. All of them together are in a sense a piece, a collection of laboratory equipment, to be rearranged.

I am interested in the relationship between art and non-art, between object and image, and in the importance of context in conveying meaning and evoking ideas. The process of making is also important–the slow and ancient process of hammering flat sheet metal into three-dimensional objects–though I don't think this needs, necessarily, to have any relevance to the viewer.

above
Tools for Transmutation V, 1997
copper, bronze, wood
$24^{3}/_{4}$ x 48 x $12^{1}/_{4}$"
Photograph by Angela Webster

BEVERLY PENN b. 1955

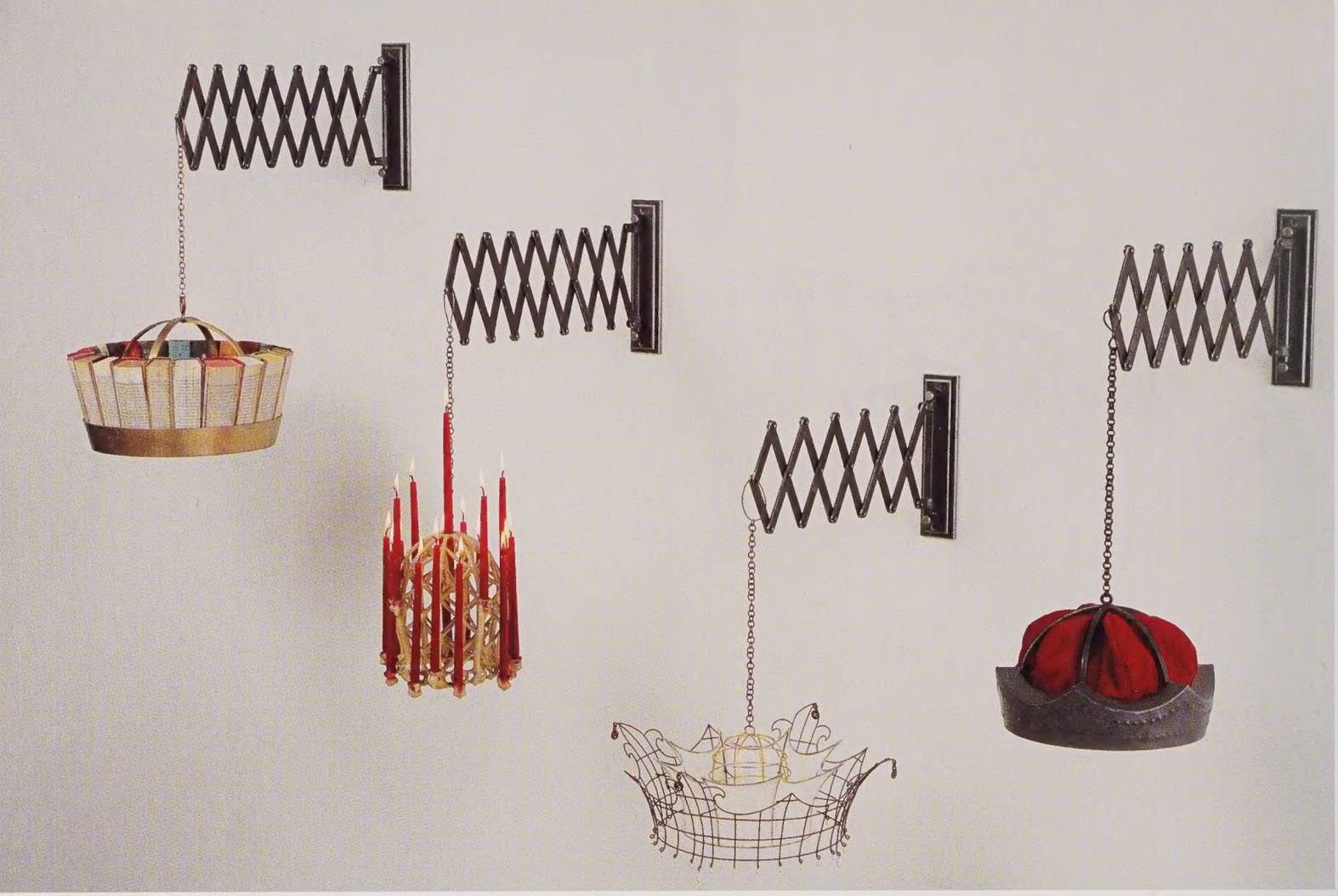
Making art is the search to understand those questions and circumstances for which there are no obvious answers. To unfold those questions, I create work that poses familiar, everyday objects in complex or disquieting ways.

As a sculptor working within the context of metalsmithing, I am informed by a history very different from other sculptors. First, I find great value in the history of the forms specific to metalsmithing, which frequently emerge in my work as subject matter. Some include objects of function or utility traditionally made of metal for durability, such as furniture, architecture, tools and machinery, fences, gates, and appliances. Others include objects of folly, amusement, or ceremony made of metal for its intrinsic value: trophies, maces and ceremonial objects, music boxes, altars, reliquaries, and shrines.

Second, I am responsive and responsible to the material, its processes, and its pedagogy. The language of metal, unique among mediums, is a call to explore such opposites as resistance and memory, ductility and strength, permanence and corrosion. I believe that work need not be consciously self-referential to the field in order to speak the particulars of its history.

above
Sub-Division, 1995
steel, trees
12 x 30 x 20'
Courtesy James Gallery, Houston Texas and Heriard-Gimano Gallery, New Orleans Louisiana
Photographs by Beverly Penn

left
Detail



HEATHER WHITE b. 1968

These are modern-day artifacts that function as cultural metaphors. The ordinary bypasser can wear any crown simply by standing underneath the retractable unit. All people experience the crowns, not just an exalted elite.

This series derives from my interest in decorative arts history, my commitment to being an artist, and the metalsmithing techniques used to fabricate the works. I am highly influenced by historical metal objects used by royal families, by military forces, and in religious rituals. These are antiquated objects we think are no longer necessary in a technological age, and yet they retain a universal significance for us.

The crowns in the *Retractable* series rely on metal to supply the physical structure and historical foundation for the ideas, but then I use non-metal materials to subvert or alter the assumed role of the object. These works *use* utility metaphorically to communicate issues of concern such as privilege, private domain, social repression, beauty, and transcendence.

above
Retractable Crowns, 1997:
extension arm 9 x 36" extended

Knowledge
steel, bronze, books
8 x 12 x 12"

Intervention
steel, beeswax

Direction
steel, 24k gold leaf, paper, pearls

Burden
steel, lead, velvet
Photographs by Heather Protz

left
Domain, 1997
steel, copper, sterling, grass
10 x 12 x 12"

JIRO J. MASUDA b. 1968

What are the associations that come to mind when we use the term flatware? It can range from the plain, worn sets found in cafeterias, to the ornate silver and gold from Tiffany's and Gorman. Flatware projects status and wealth and gives away the owner's taste. But flatware is also designed as a tool that is not meant to be noticed while we dine. Part of that unobtrusiveness is in the standardized format of the fork, the knife, and the spoon. It is this universality that attracted me to the idea of tampering with the flatware icon.

These pieces challenge our perception of flatware and of the dining experience. They are all functional—because this is not a theoretical exercise but a practical one. The flatware was tested on real subjects eating real meals. Not only did the diners learn to negotiate the new format; they also could not help talking to their fellow diners as they worked the new utensils, speaking no longer as individuals, but as people sharing their unaccustomed experience with one another.

left
Hybrid Flatware: Drill Bits, 1996
found objects, stainless steel, steel
$10^{3}/_{4} \times {}^{3}/_{4}$"

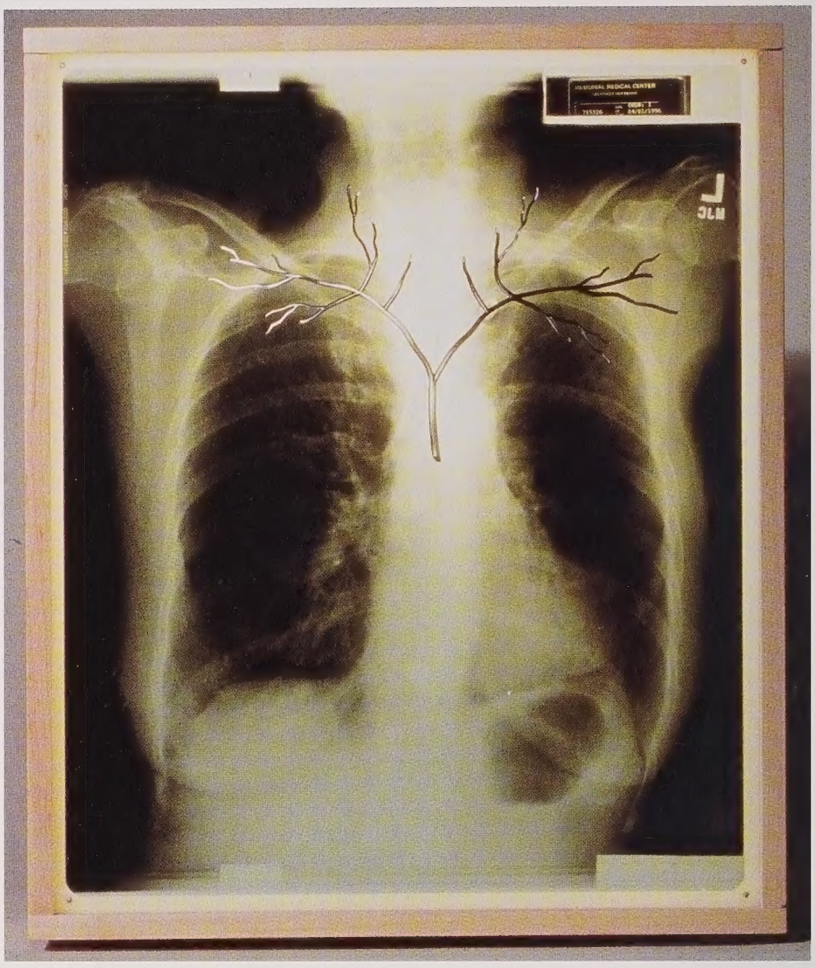
below
Hybrid Flatware: Plumb Bob, 1997
found objects, sterling silver, steel
$41^{3}/_{4} \times 1^{1}/_{4} \times 1^{1}/_{4}$" each
Photographs by R. H. Hensleigh

JULIA BARELLO b. 1957

Both medicine and art represent the body in ways which define concepts and reveal empirical information—but also biases. The surface of the body is the site of adornment where visible meaning is located, whereas its interior presents a mystery, unseen but imagined, utterly essential and physical. In this piece I merge two ways of representing and interpreting the body to illuminate the space between the two disciplines, revealing their kinship and difference.

To this end, I superimpose over an X-ray a piece in sterling silver that could well function as jewelry. The patterns in the design of jewelry on the surface of the skin reflect those that lay beneath. The work is about the visceral, physical, and temporal nature of the body, but also about acts in our lives—visits to the doctor, the examination of our bodies, the construction of self-knowledge.

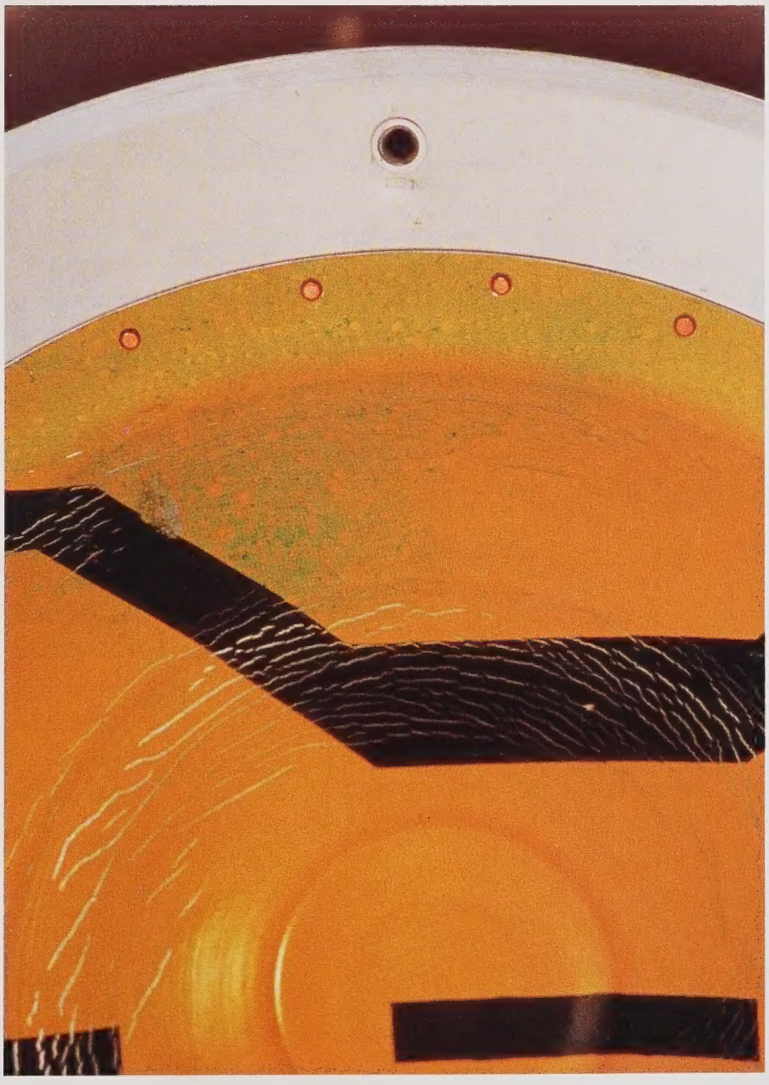
right
Vascular Studies V: Anterior Brooch, 1996
sterling silver, X-ray, maple
19 x 16 x 7"
Photograph by Mike Laurence



DIANE A. ARCHER b. 1954

My work is influenced by the field of study called bioregionalism. Very simply, bioregionalism defines place by physical characteristics, rather than political boundaries, and is concerned with exploring and connecting to an important place in those terms. I use topographical maps combined with objects found in the area the maps represent. In the piece shown here, a stained map displays pieces of trash collected from the area and covered with topographic map sections. Through these materials I explore and celebrate the energy of place.

left
Bioregion Wallpiece IV (Trash), 1997
wood and foam-core, topographical map,
photo-etched brass corners, trash
34 x 24 x 3"
Photograph by Michael Loderstedt



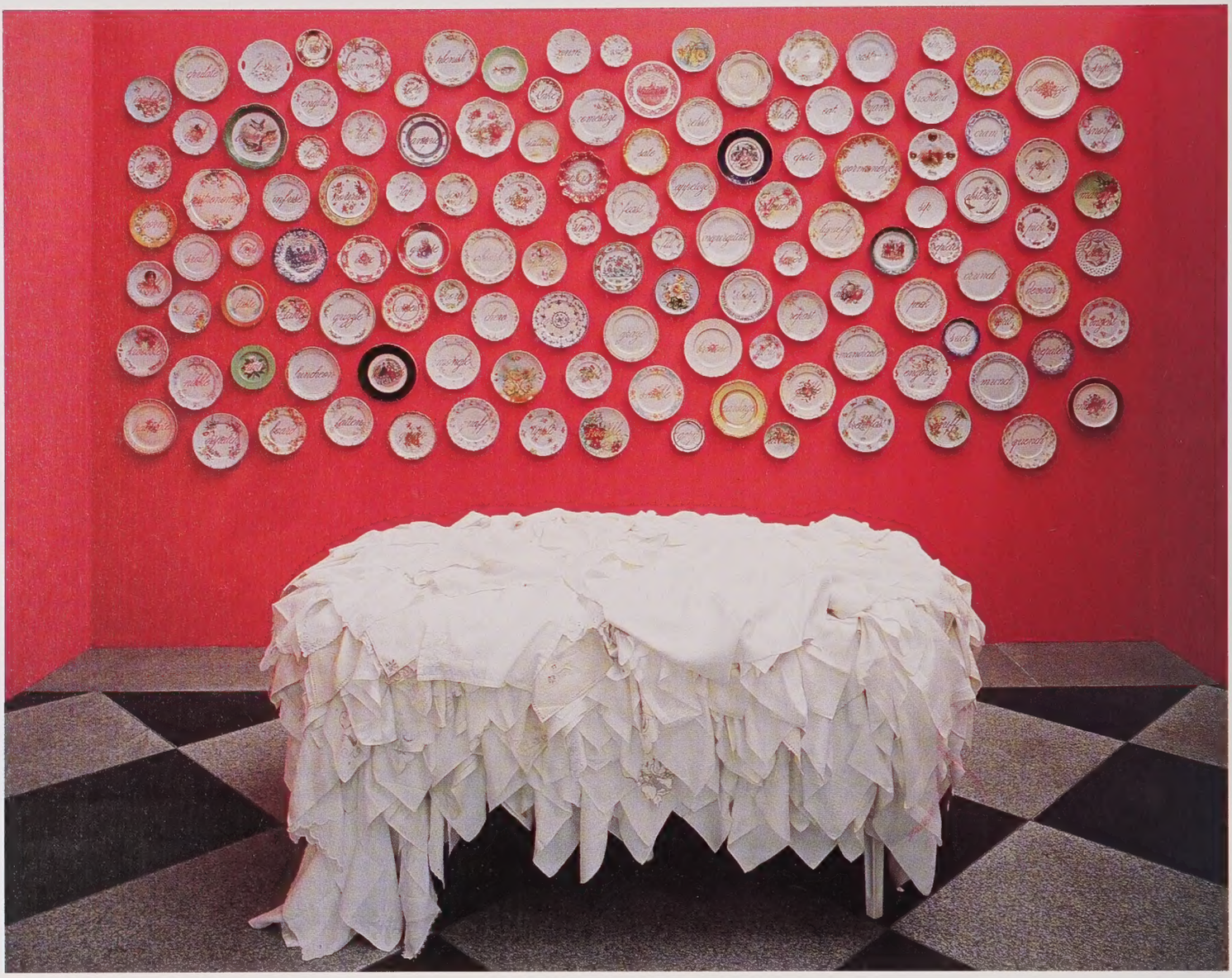
BORIS BALLY b. 1961

This wall installation celebrates the children of the Cleveland community, through cheerful color and playful imagery. It is made from recycled reflective yellow traffic signs, carefully chosen over numerous trips to scrap dealers.

I create the bowl forms by hand, spinning them on a special lathe. I push the flat metal over a steel form that is rotating rapidly. Later I cut flat aluminum rims for each unit on a large circular shear, give them a special light-catching brushed finish, and rivet them to the bowl forms.

above
Discovery: Yellow, 1997
recycled traffic signs, aluminum, copper rivets; installation: 12 x 24'
each bowl: 24 1/2 x 1/2"
Photographs by Boris Bally

left
Detail



CAROL KUMATA b. 1949

I define myself as a sculptor from a metalsmithing background. There are certain qualities which, while not unique to metalsmithing, nevertheless make their presence known in my work. I was drawn to metals in part because I loved the process. I have expanded the type of work I do to include other materials, but some of the labor-intensive processes remain. I am also interested in detail and pattern, something that was missing in much sculpture during my college years. I think many of my peers went into the crafts movement because of the reductivist styles taught in sculpture when we were in school. The intricate types of beauty available to the craft world were a seductive draw for those of us bored with minimalist and post-minimalist movements.

In my recent work I revisit some of the territory I thought to have left behind: the field of decorative arts. I have been working on a series that uses found objects, generally ones referring to dining. In my *Untitled Installation* with ceramic plates and napkins, I reglaze the plates with words that are synonymous for eating. I apply the same decorative arts technique originally used to fashion the object, but this time to deface it. This is both a denial and an homage, and it reflects my interest in facade and the reality behind that facade. My installation is about politeness and the society of manners. It is also about the ambiguity that many people, especially women, have toward food thus it raises the issue of consumption.

above
Untitled Installation, 1997
found and altered ceramic plates, table, and tablecloths
8 x 16 x 8'
Photographs by Bill Redic

left
Detail

HARRIETE ESTEL BERMAN b. 1952

grass \'gras\ 1: having slender pointed leaves characteristic of the grass family; 2: an expanse of ground, such as a lawn, covered with grass

Square Yard of Grass raises many points. Blades of grass cut from recycled tin containers reflect our consumer society. Grass lawns luxuriate in their conspicuous consumption. An expanse of lawn says, "I own this space, but I don't need to use it." Yet perfect grass is sustained only by spending time and money at an even greater cost to our environment.

below
Square Yard of Grass, 1998,
pre-printed steel,
copper base
6 x 36 x 36"
Photographs by Philip Cohen

left
Detail

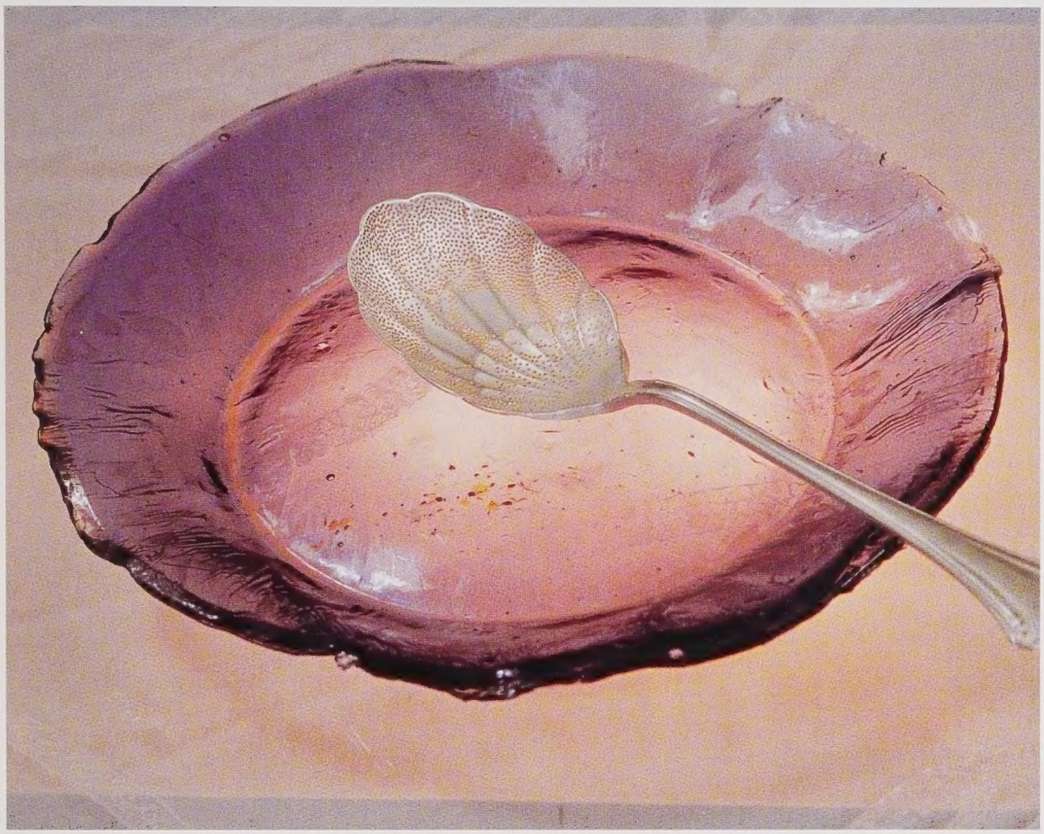
KRISTEN FOGTMAN-FAUST b. 1966

In my work I use mundane objects associated with women, such as the purses in *Just Three More Pounds*. Because of the way I select and treat the simple objects, imbuing them with concept, they convert to sculpture. I display the inherent familiarity in the dimensional forms and create common objects that complement femininity while triggering a nostalgic fondness. Based on personal experience, I examine the insecurities and desires of women.

The bearer of these purses betrays an obsessive nature, as suggested in the multiple forms and repetitious images. Within the purse's intimate interior, the obscure details reflect the need to mask and internalize such a personal struggle.

above
Just Three More Pounds, 1996
copper, bronze, chocolate, cotton, paint, ink
24 x 36 x 12"
Photographs by Gumieny Studios

left
Detail



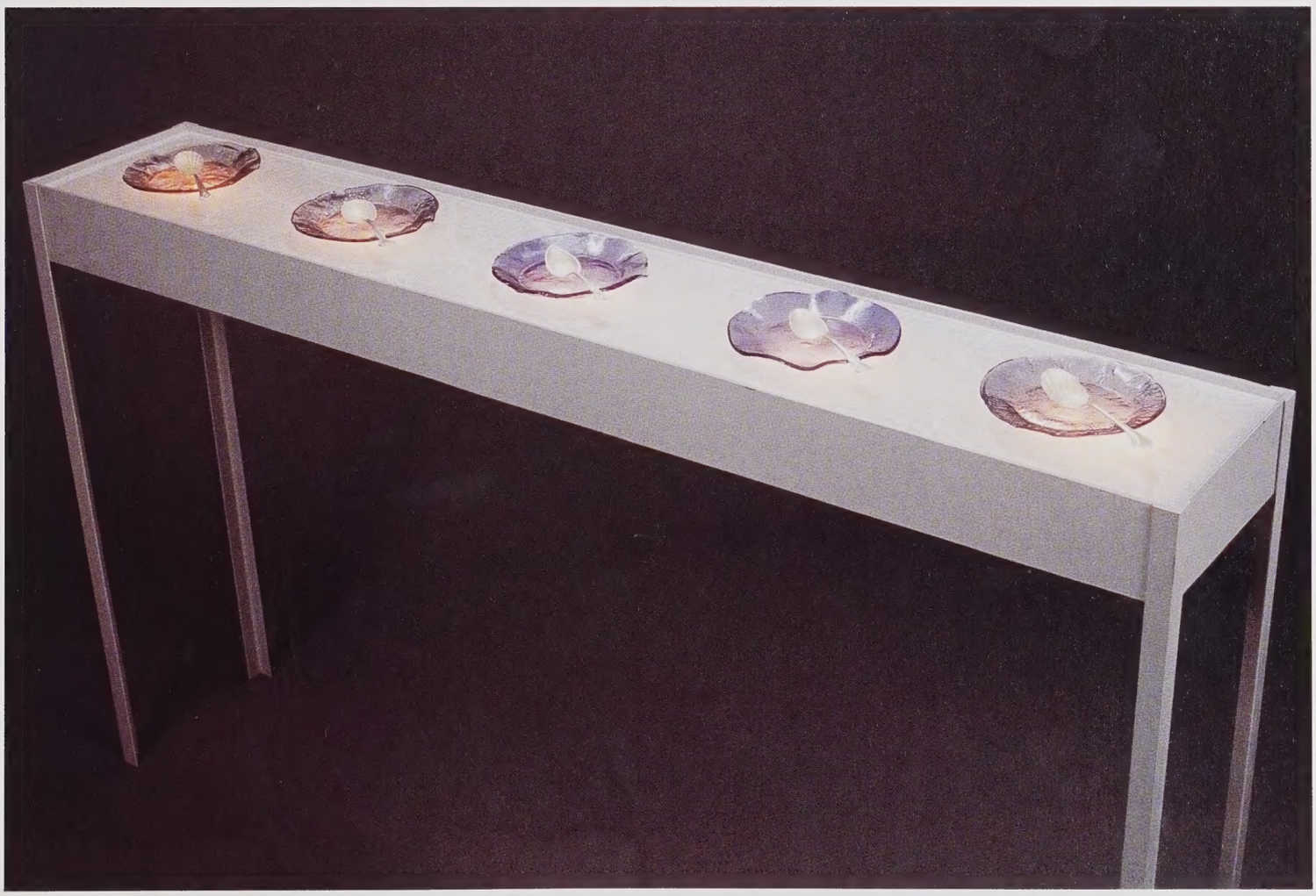
CAROLYNN DESCH b. 1944

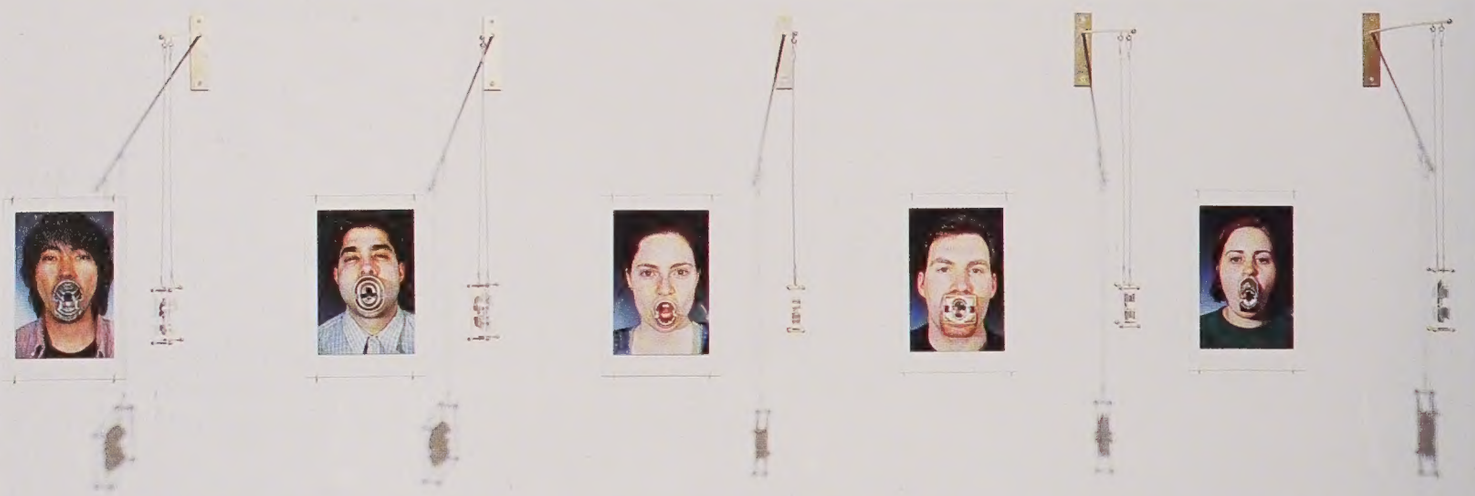
In my work, I am investigating the process of aging: how the mind and body let us down and how we manage as we age. I consider nurturing and whether it helps us cope. The accoutrements of the ritual surrounding dining give me the images, as well as the situation and space for exploring my fears and musings about the body.

In *No Thank You*, I place a pierced sterling silver spoon across a sugar plate. With the passage of time, the plate turns from a clear, crystalline, fluid object into a clouded misty form. (Each time I show this piece, I have to remake the sugar plates.) The blue of the plate refers to oxygen, and the sugar, to glucose–two elements essential for us to sustain life.

below
No Thank You, 1997
pierced sterling silver, steel, Plexiglas, sugar
35 x 60 x 10"
Photographs by Gumieny Studios

left
Detail





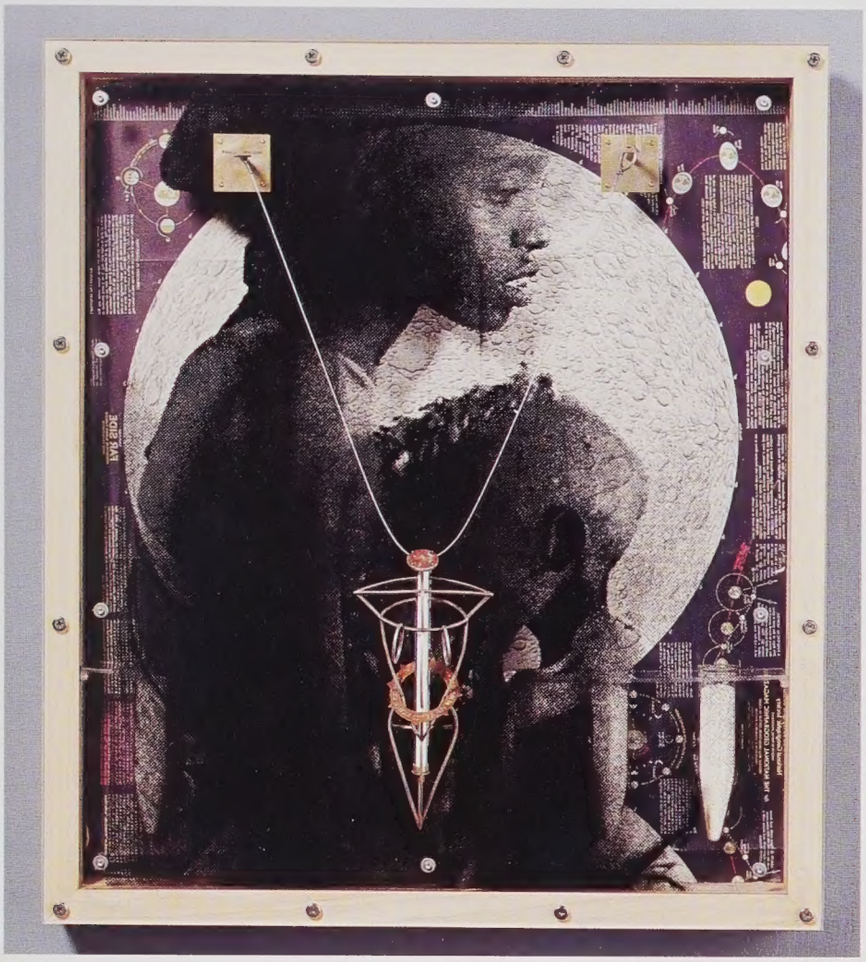
HEIDI SCHWEGLER b. 1967

This installation is a suite of tools, some fabricated from metal and precious metal, and others from bright colored plastic. They are inspired in part by medical hardware dating from the nineteenth century, for example, the elaborately engineered gynecological speculum, and in part by the routine associated with medical examination, which immobilizes and restrains the patient, taking away the possessive pronoun for "your" body and substituting the impersonal article "the." In the partial view shown above, five mouthpieces are displayed, with a photograph declaring their proper insertion. These objects act on the mouth, an orifice rich with cultural contradictions and associations, with sexualized content as well as communicative power. Of the pathways leading to and from the body, it is the one open to public display and involvement.

I equate the institutional framing of the gallery space with that of the examination room. Both circumscribe the viewer to culturally sanctioned formal and visual cues. They impose or bestow objecthood on the sculpture/patient; likewise, the requirement for a uniform palette of textures and surfaces (gowns, tables, walls) with a perversely hygienic finish also recalls the gallery and the exam room at once.

above
The Body Transformed, 1998
Cibachrome, Nu-gold, silver, steel, Plexiglas
$2^1/_2$ x 12'
Photographs by Bill Bachhuber

left
Mouthpiece I, 1998
silver, Nu-gold, steel spring
2 x 2 x 1"



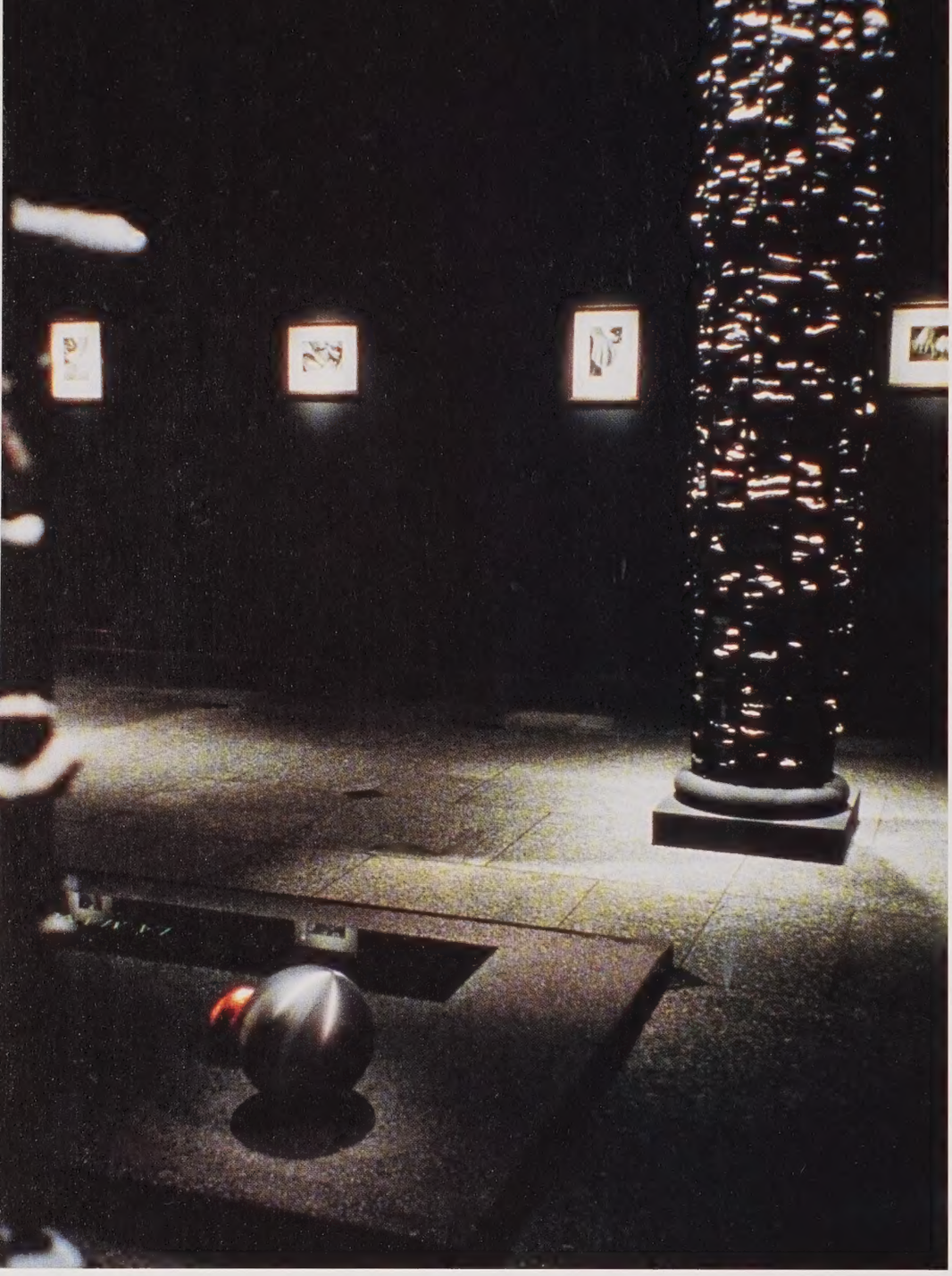
THOMAS MANN b. 1947

Food for Thought reflects my involvement with New Orleans Artists Against Hunger & Homelessness. The piece premiered at the Gallery I/O in New Orleans in 1993, then traveled to seven galleries across the country over the next two years. It doubles as an exhibition and a fund-raising strategy for addressing world hunger.

I designed *Food for Thought* as a concept that would involve galleries with their local charities. The artwork and one-of-a-kind pieces were for sale, as were related production pieces, *Food for Thought* Utensil Pins, and tee-shirts bearing the *FFT* logo. A percentage of receipts went to the non-profits, with the sponsoring galleries also making a contribution. This strategy combines methods from the craft marketplace, with art's potential to represent abstract models for a new paradigm of thinking. I call this wrapping of the elements together "Space Frame Themology." It brings my daily life and practice into line, giving me a way to get involved again. You know the adage: Think globally, act locally.

below
Food for Thought, 1993
silver, bronze, brass, wood, photo silk-screen, Plexiglas, glass, corncobs, rice, mixed grains, wheat, sugar, powdered milk
20 x 60'
Photograph by Owen Murphy

left
Detail, *Goddess No. 1*, 1993
silver, bronze, glass, powdered milk
21 x 13 x 4"
Photograph by Will Crocker



CHRISTINA DEPAUL b. 1959

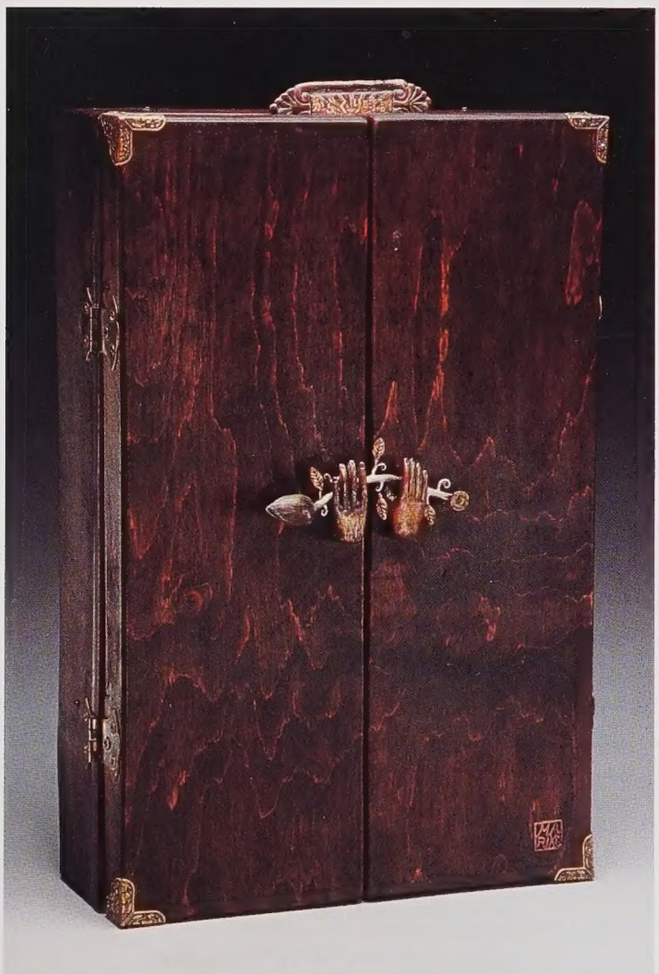
My work emerges from the metalsmith's minute attention to detail: our understanding of materials; concern with seams, joints, and other connections; meticulously detailed craftsmanship; and the complex processes that bring these elements to perfection. Maintaining the rigor and integrity of craftsmanship in large-scale works is difficult but artistically rewarding. The works I have created express my love of materials and make manifest my skills and technical ability. But the craftsmanship invested in their creation, while crucial, is not the point of my work. Historically, Craft was associated with the realm of the physical, and Art was associated with the realm of the intellectual. I attempt to unite the two in my work in a synthesis of skill, form, and idea.

La Mano di Tradizione marks a departure from my previous installations. It examines the history of an ethnic community—the Italian immigrants of Cleveland—filtered through my recollections of growing up in an Italian family.

I pay homage to the highly-skilled stoneworkers who were brought over to work on Lake View Cemetery, and who remained to plant roots in America. A slab of polished stone in the center of the installation recalls the gravestones they created. Inset with the Italian words *tradizione, famiglia, comunità, lavoro*, it also commemorates the values of this community: tradition, family, community, and work. The three metal balls transform the oblong into a *boccie* court (*boccie* or bowls is an outdoor pastime played by men on a humble patch of sand—in the old country, often on a village square). Pillars filled with stone chips, a symbol of community strength, flank the granite court. Photographs lining the walls reiterate the theme of hand labor, extending it from the stone workers to the bakers, the priests, and the merchants who make up the neighborhood. Although in Cleveland other districts have succumbed to urban blight, Little Italy remains vital and open to the artists and galleries now installed and welcome there.

above left
Detail: *La Mano di Tradizione (The Hand of Tradition)*
An Installation at the Cleveland Museum of Art, 1996
marble, granite, steel, copper, aluminum photos
column: 15' H
Photographs by Robert Wright

left
Detail
see also cover



MARIKO KUSUMOTO b. 1967

My father was a Buddhist priest and I grew up in a temple founded four hundred years ago. While living there I took the place for granted. The more time I spend living in the United States—with its diverse cultures and varied ethnic groups—the more conscious I become of my identity as Japanese. As the yearning for my temple grows, I gain a greater sense of appreciation of it, as well as of Japanese culture. With time my memories become stronger and more vivid. This feeling is the inspiration of my artwork today.

Metal has been a familiar material to me since I was a child. Polishing the elaborate metal ornaments in the altars in my temple was one of my chores. When the gleam of the gold-colored ornaments would emerge from the darkness, I could sense the spiritual world and its eternal silence.

In my metalwork I often use brass, which is similar to the colors of the ornaments in my temple. In order to suggest darkness and age, I use several kinds of patina. As I create space and composition within the box, I think about where the found objects fit and how they relate. Within the small size of my works I create a world of shadows, light, silence, spirituality, and personal memory.

When I think about my temple I remember the antique paintings with their faded colors, the hollows in the stone steps that four hundred years of rain dripping from the roof has created, and the dark colors of wood grain and old metal. In autumn every pavement stone is covered like a rug with multi-colored gingko and maple leaves. In summer I would be lulled to sleep by the sounds of the crickets and the owls outside.

above
Karakuri Dokei (Clock with Movement), 1997
wood, brass, nickel silver, copper, bronze, paper
15 x 10 x 2 1/2" (closed)
Photographs by Lee Fatherree

left
Detail

BRUCE METCALF b. 1949

As an artist, what would I do? Or, to start with, what would I not do?

First, I wouldn't make art-magazine art. No material *du jour*: beeswax, semen, intestinal linings, whatever. No clumps of sad found objects, no installations. Nothing that overpowers people by sheer bulk. No splashes, no drips. No blank surfaces, devoid of pleasure, but full of Calvinist righteousness. No claims of spiritual awakening. No appeal for credibility from impenetrable French philosophy. Nothing dematerialized. No words written on the wall.

So, what would I do? First, I would make objects: tangible things made carefully of real materials. Then, I would make work accessible to people outside the artworld—a populist impulse—and I would also give it a distinctly American flavor. The cartoony stylization I employ places my images in such a vernacular. But I also want to show the result of study and reflection—to make objects full of meaning. I insist on what used to be called content. I want to address the personal and social, especially the way that states of mind influence (and even control) the way individuals conduct their transactions in the real world. I want the lightness of the human spirit: a touch of whimsy. I want a taste of darkness, too.

Most of all, I want to make objects that I can love: small, detailed, carefully wrought, and a little absurd.

I also have numerous subtexts in mind: the assertion of "minor" forms like small sculpture and jewelry; the use of fine craftsmanship for the sheer pleasure of doing so, and also as a metaphor for integrity; the critique of formalism as the subject of art; the simultaneous refusal to dissolve art into philosophy itself.

I consider myself both a craftsman and a narrative-symbolist artist, and I see no contradictions between the two. The careful fabrication and the traditional use of these objects identify them as craft, while my symbolization of states of mind in contemporary society (with all the peripheral implications about power relations and ideology) identify them as art.

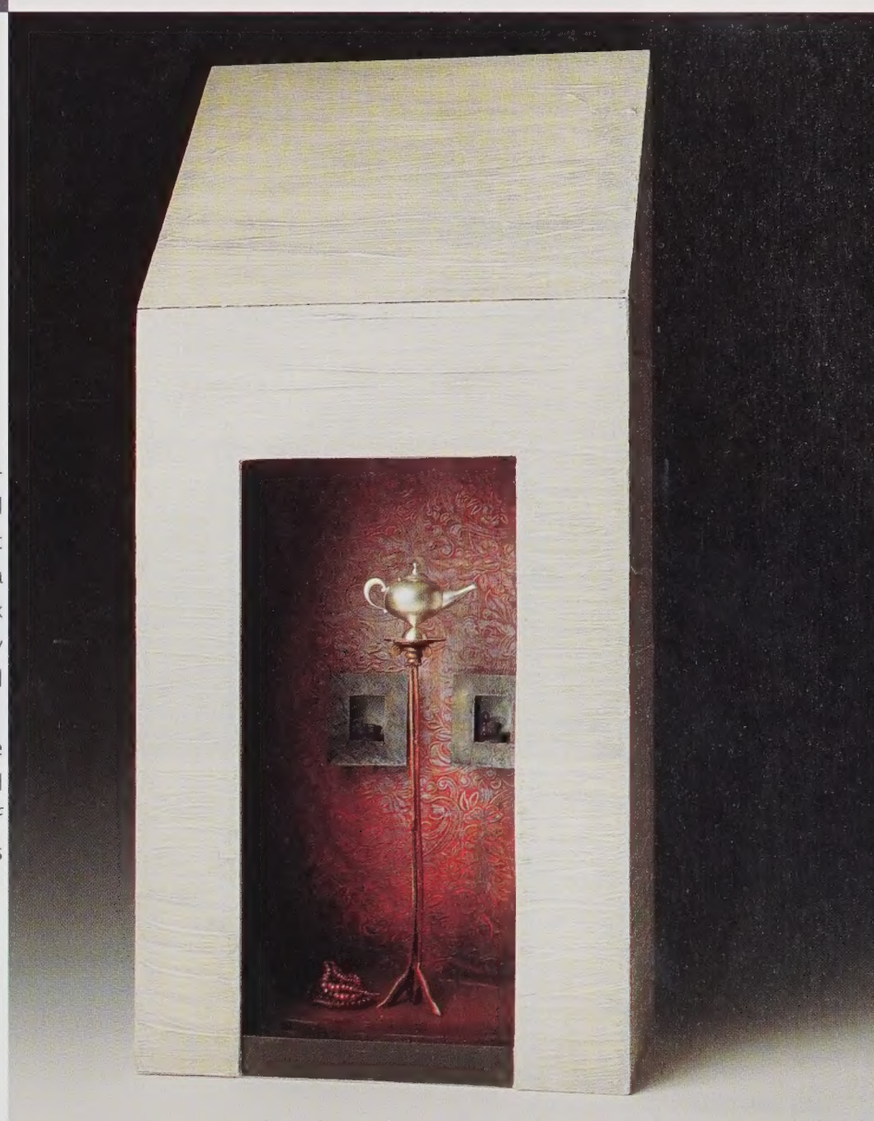
left
Illumination, 1996-97
stage: wood, brass, light bulb
12 x 7 x 4"
pin: copper, brass, paint
4 1/2 x 2"
Courtesy of Perimeter Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
Photograph by S. Truglia

ROD MCCORMICK b. 1952

I am a craftsperson and a sculptor. Within the crafts tradition, I respond to metalworking processes, to metal as a material, and to the challenge of making a utilitarian object. Yet I find that the traditional products of the silversmith have little relevance in our contemporary culture. The lamp allows me to produce an object with a place in the domestic environment.

I use a 3-D computer-modeling program to design my work. I was drawn to the computer as an efficiency aid, but found that software has a character as much as real materials do. When I use the keyboard and mouse to create, I am as absorbed as when I watch my hammer blows move metal. The computer allows me to take the hard geometry and play with it intuitively. *Way* is seamed out of basic metalsmithing forms: cylinders and truncated cones. The transparency of the perforated aluminum sheet allows me to create forms within forms.

left
Way, 1998
aluminum, electrical components, halogen bulb
38 x 14 x 14"
Photograph by Rod McCormick



LINDA THREADGILL b. 1947

My work is a hybrid of painting and model-making. Since 1982 I have worked with small room environments, soliciting the engagement of the viewer in spaces that present a drama both timeless and unreal. As miniature tableaux vivants they present a mute drama of destiny and entrapment with all the hopeful and fearful aspects of shelter.

Familiar craft objects and furniture are emotional conduits, metaphors for identity and the inner experience in daily life. The use of ornamental patterns and interior spaces alluding to female roles is intentional.

right
There She Stood, as Strange as Something Loaned, 1997
sterling silver, bronze, brass, painted wood
30 x 14 x 6"
Photograph by James Threadgill

HAI-CHI JIHN b. 1959

I like to refer to my works as cross-cultural stories. They arise from my interest in everyday miracles of the mundane, and they reflect upon cultural heritage. Often my pieces allude to rites of passage, to devotion, and struggle.

My Dowry: Bed Slippers is dedicated to my grandma and to all other women of her generation, in remembrance of their bound feet. In China women had their feet bound to please an eventual husband. At the prospect of marriage, women would make for themselves four pairs of slippers as part of the dowry. One pair would be bed slippers. The long strip of fabric with which the women's feet were bound was never taken off. Slippers would cover their feet even when they were in bed sleeping.

above
My Dowry: Bed Slippers, 1998
sterling silver
$1^1/_2 \times 2 \times 8$"
Photographs by Gumieny Studios

left
Detail

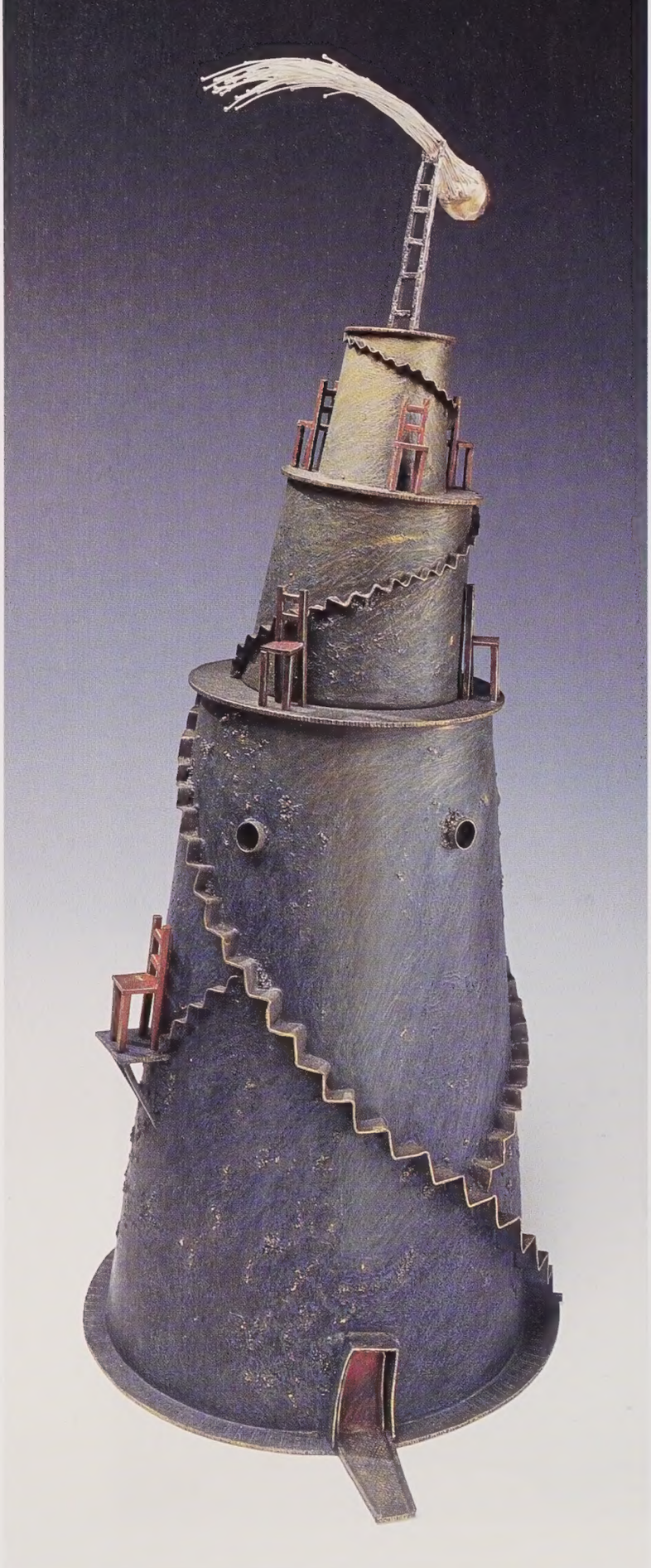
SUSAN KINGSLEY b. 1942

The environment of display invites reverie. It evokes an imaginary world of curiosity, wonder, longing, and desire. It is a place where objects perform rituals of culture. We return to the arcade, the mall, the museum, the department store, the gift shop, and the boutique to observe objects and re-envision ourselves within the fantastic arena of display. And we often leave with a souvenir of the experience.

Objects tell us about ourselves. Those associated with the body may define identity, gender, and social relationships; they also define its fragmentation and ambiguous boundaries. My intention is to disappoint expectation, to disrupt and undermine business as usual. My work proposes to declassify definitions and demystify categories such as art, craft, the body, gender, nature, and culture.

I prefer materials that project their properties over and beyond the physical object and processes that draw upon the technical skills I have acquired through years of practice. Metal is a fluid material. It is of the earth and in our bodies, shaping civilization from ancient times into the future. It remains a substance of great beauty, mystery, and knowledge for the postmodern alchemist.

above
22 Pound Pb Platforms, 1998
shoes: lead, size 6, 22 pounds each
box: paper and cardboard
Photograph by Robert Neimy



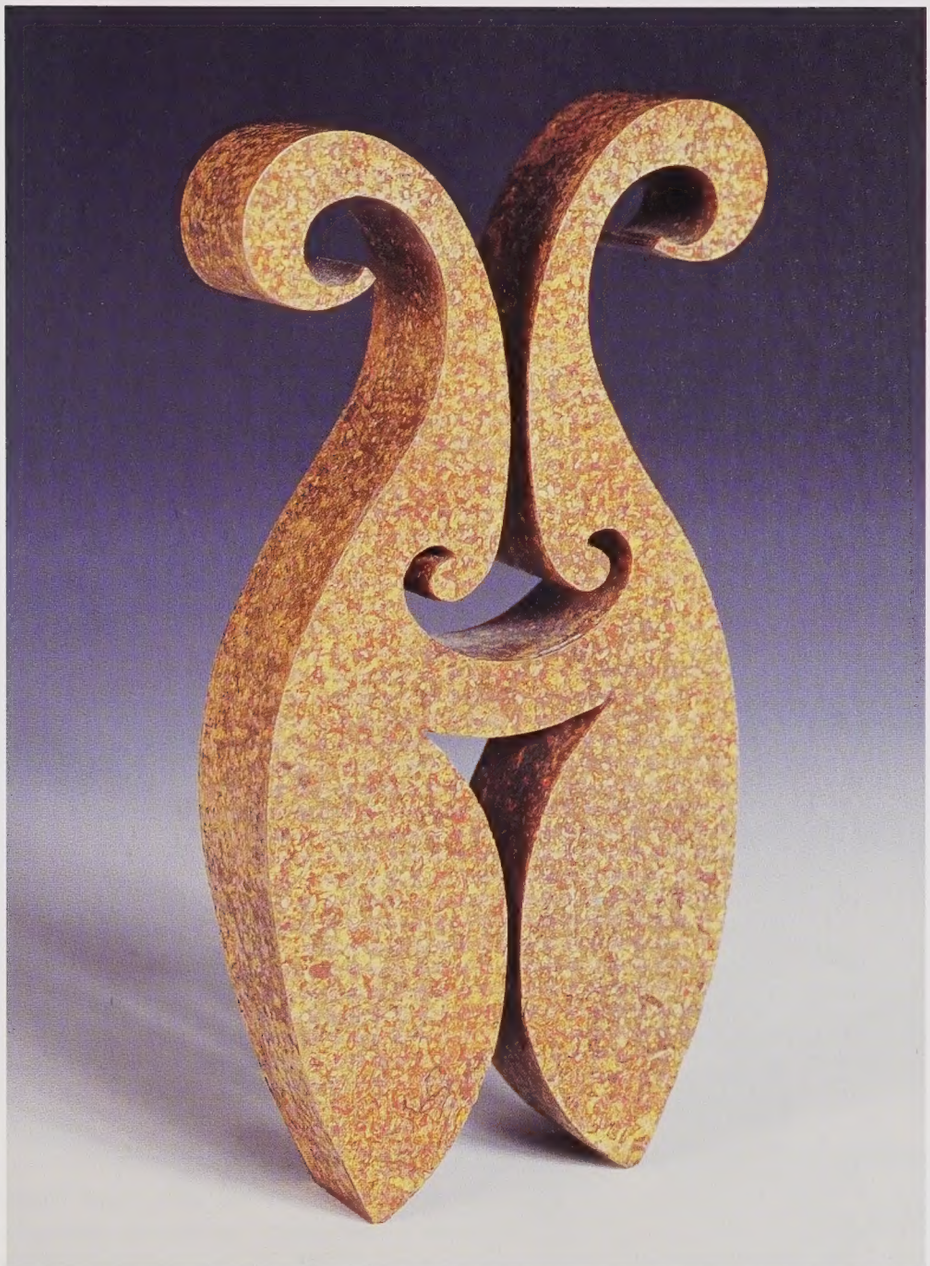
MARILYN DA SILVA b. 1952

Spring of 1997 was a busy time for me. Every night when I returned home tired and ready to rest, there were two spotted dogs that greeted me, their tails wagging. They had waited all day for their walk around the neighborhood. As tired as I was, I did not mind because it was a way to relax. Also, for three weeks (weather permitting), a spectacular vision held my eyes as I walked: the Hale-Bopp comet. The last time it was seen by any humans, the Pyramids were being built. I wondered how they responded back then to this object in the sky. I was fascinated with the effect it had on people today and how some believed it was the sign of a new life. It reminded me of how small I was, just a metalsmith on a tiny planet out walking my dogs.

When it passes again, what will be happening in our world?

left
Tales of Hale-Bopp, 1997
copper, sterling silver
gesso, sand, colored pencil
18 x 9 x 7"
Photographs by Philip Cohen

below
Detail



ROBLY A. GLOVER b. 1956

I concentrate on the interpretation of the human form and the influence of the Venus archetype as a symbol of magic, as a creative force, and as a protective talisman. The Venus is a consistent image throughout the figure-making tradition and carries both an emotional and intellectual content. In *Bull Venus*, I am thinking about the ancient Minoan culture where a goddess-figure is worshipped, but so is the archetypal bull. I bring the male and female forms together, exploring their confluence from one into the other, making the horns echo the shape of the womb. This embodies fertility and the movement of life's energy. Using stylized images from across history in this way, I am able to interpret the images of my own culture as well.

above
Bull Venus, 1998
constructed brass, chemical patina
8 x 4 x 1"
Photograph by Robert Suddarth

IRA D. SHERMAN b. 1950

The Arbitrator defines and solves failed negotiations, including but not limited to power-control, self-interest, revenge, and bad judgment. *The Arbitrator* removes any advantage one party may have over another by forcing both to hold to a prescribed period of time for looking the other in the eye, speaking truthfully, recording the issues, and concluding.

Used as a last resort to end a deadlock, *The Arbitrator* adds new meaning to the term "high pressure negotiation." Tactics such as stalling are eliminated by a timing controller (a photo-electric egg timer preset for the duration). As the sand trickles away, beams of light trip solenoid valves that pressurize components in the sculpture to lock both parties into binding arbitration. The sculpture includes galvanic finger-tip sensors to detect lying, an external voice recording, and an ergonomic design for comfortable wear. If mutual understanding is not reached before the time runs out, a flood of ultra-high pressure compresses both parties into the sculpture, making the need for future negotiation irrelevant.

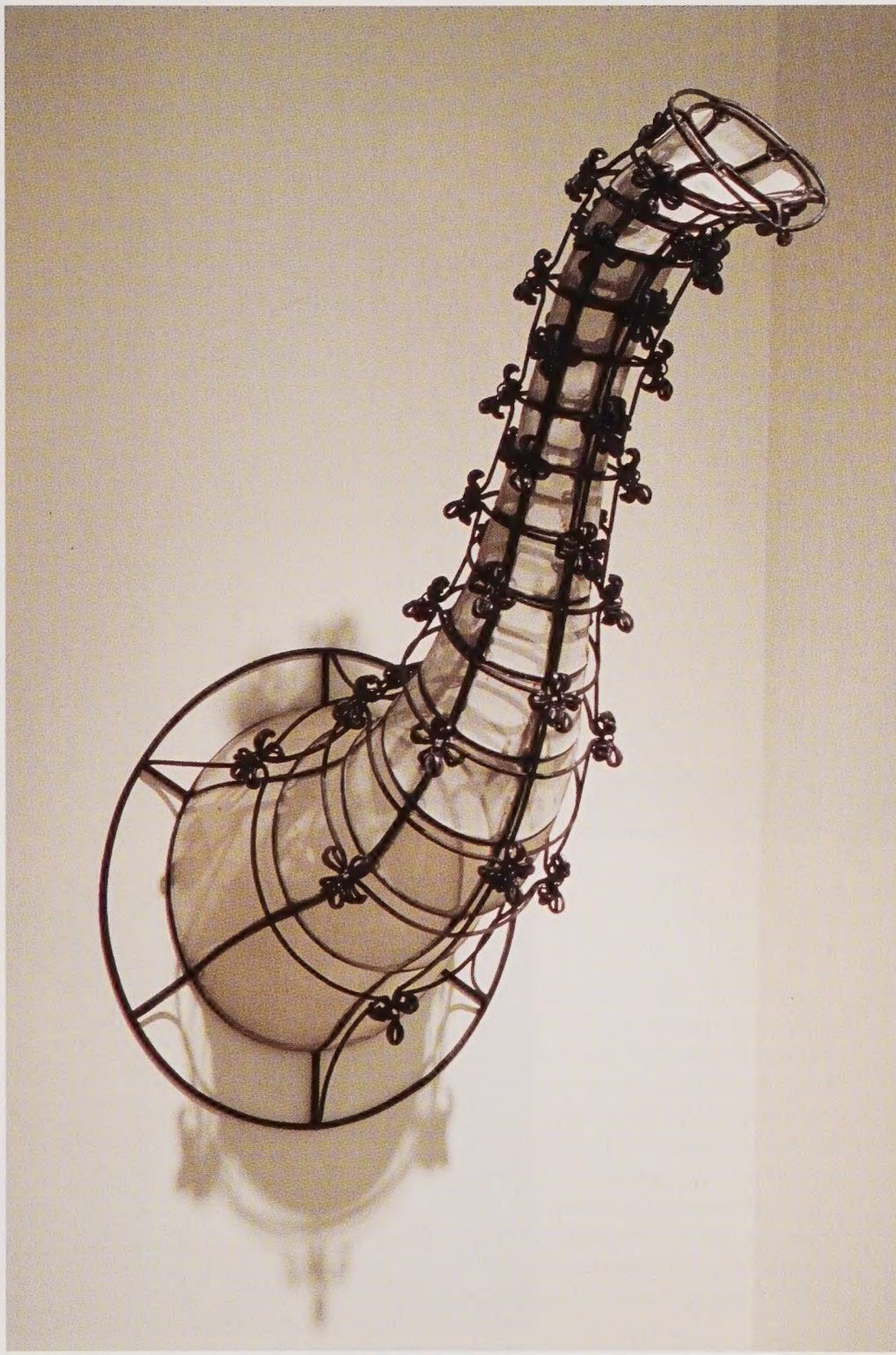
above
The Arbitrator, 1995-97
steel, brass, stainless, plastic
5 x 5 x 3'
Photographs by Robert Goldman

left
Detail, with subjects

KIM L. CRIDLER b. 1968

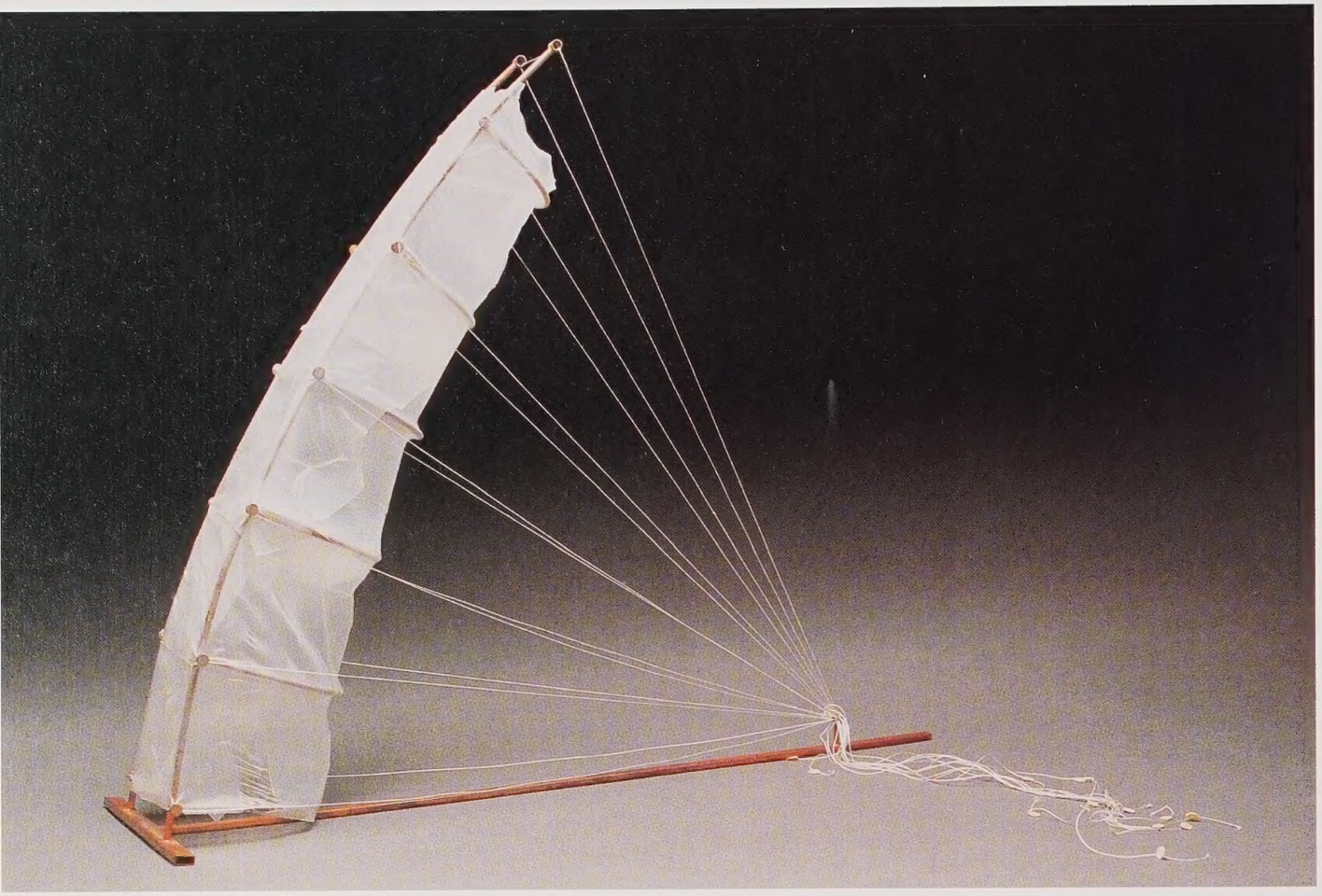
I make structural maps or models of decorative and domestic objects which—stripped of utility—become free to speak of the emotional, cultural, historical, and sexual climates in which these object participate. More important, perhaps, is the idea that practical use—now skinned from these forms—becomes the true locus of meaning: the real object. The work which remains is preserved, memorialized, and rarefied by concentrated and intensive labor. It may activate a longing for, and an awareness of the power and depth of making and using.

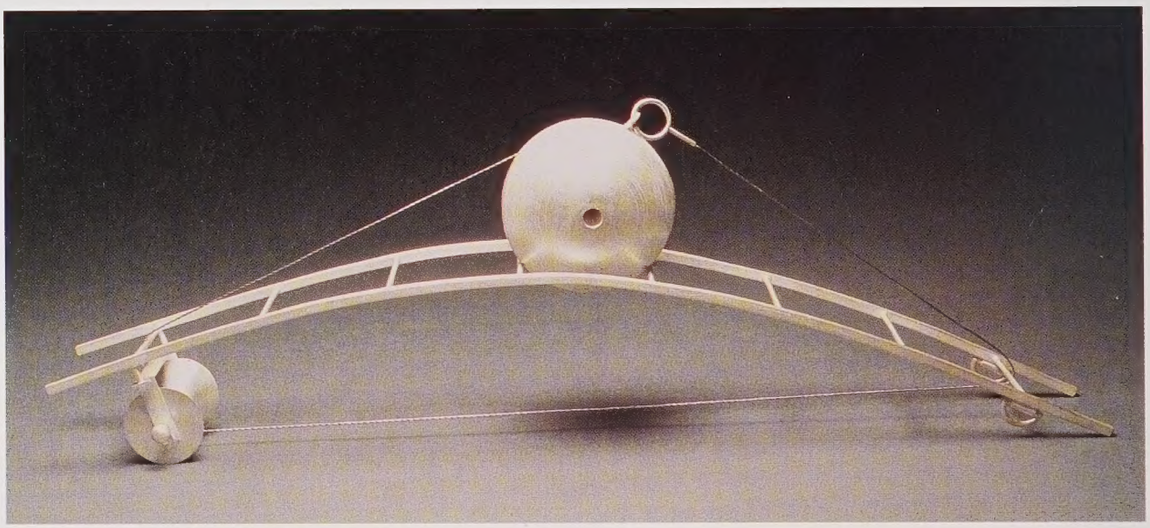
I feel privileged to have inherited a way of making and seeing from craft. I believe that the forms, processes, and materials that give flesh to our field are rich with content: this palpable tension between structure and decoration, the intellectual and the physical, the cognitive and the emotive.



right
spout, 1997
steel, wax, silk
63 x 30 x 40"
Courtesy of Lisa Sette Gallery
Photographs by Michael Quinn

below
Installation view, at University Art Museum, California State University, Long Beach, 1998





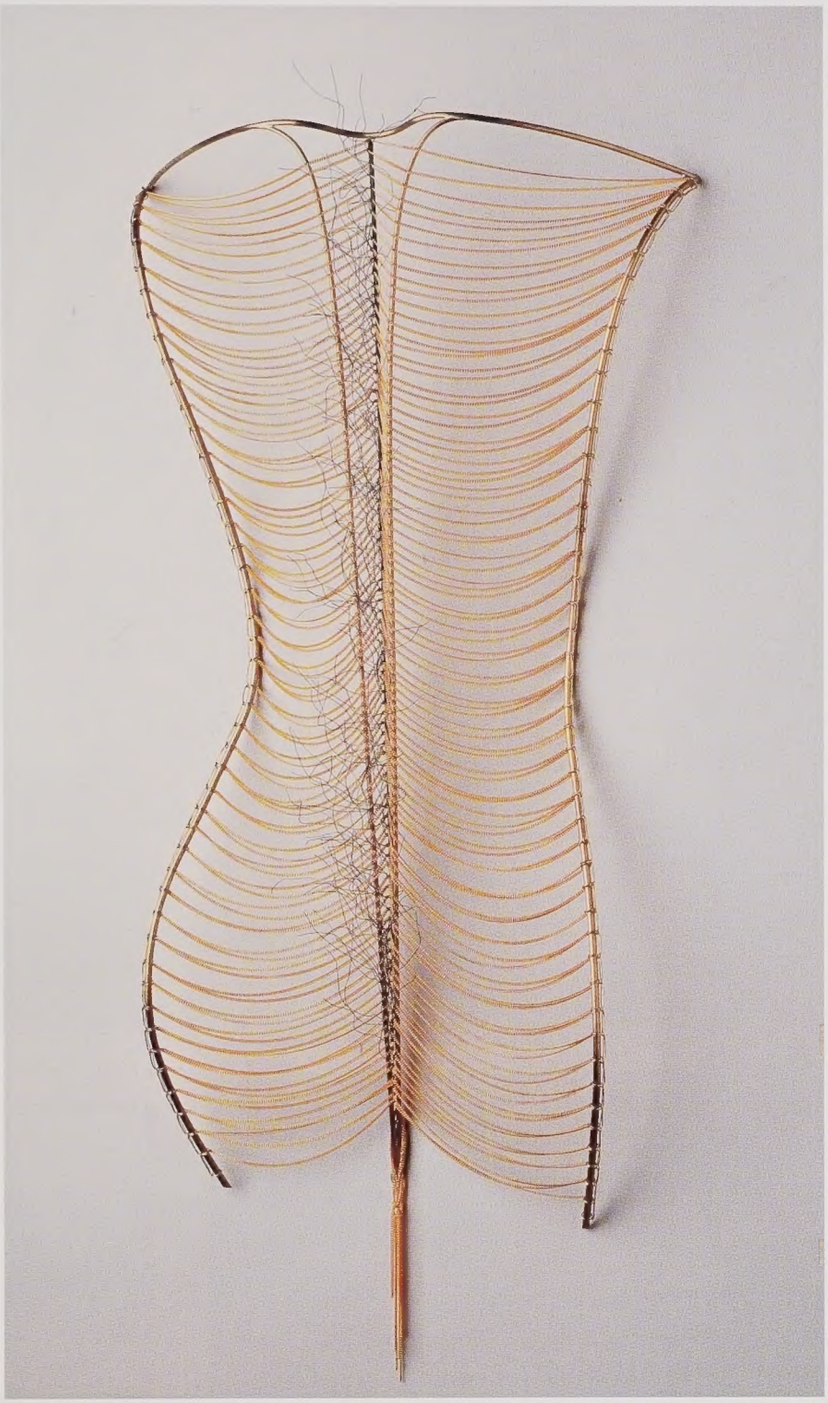
JEANNE BEAVER b. 1971

These pieces come from two different but related series. *Bearing the Burden* is from the series *In Tension with the Object*. It reflects on the conspiracy between inner needs and everyday experience, where such reconfigured roles as the superwoman require strength but also self-denial, and impose on you the contradiction of meeting everyone's needs but your own. I intend for the object—which is wearable—to be conspicuous, so that the wearer will carry self-consciousness along with the piece.

Waiting in the Wings is from a series using different materials to explore how structures can imply an enormous amount of strain. To me this reflects the alienated social condition of contemporary life.

top
Waiting in the Wings, 1998
copper-plated brass
silk thread, parafilm, shell
12 x 12 x 4"
bottom
Bearing the Burden, An Object for the Back, 1998
sterling silver, stainless steel
17 x 5 x 2 1/4"

Photographs by Jeanne Beaver

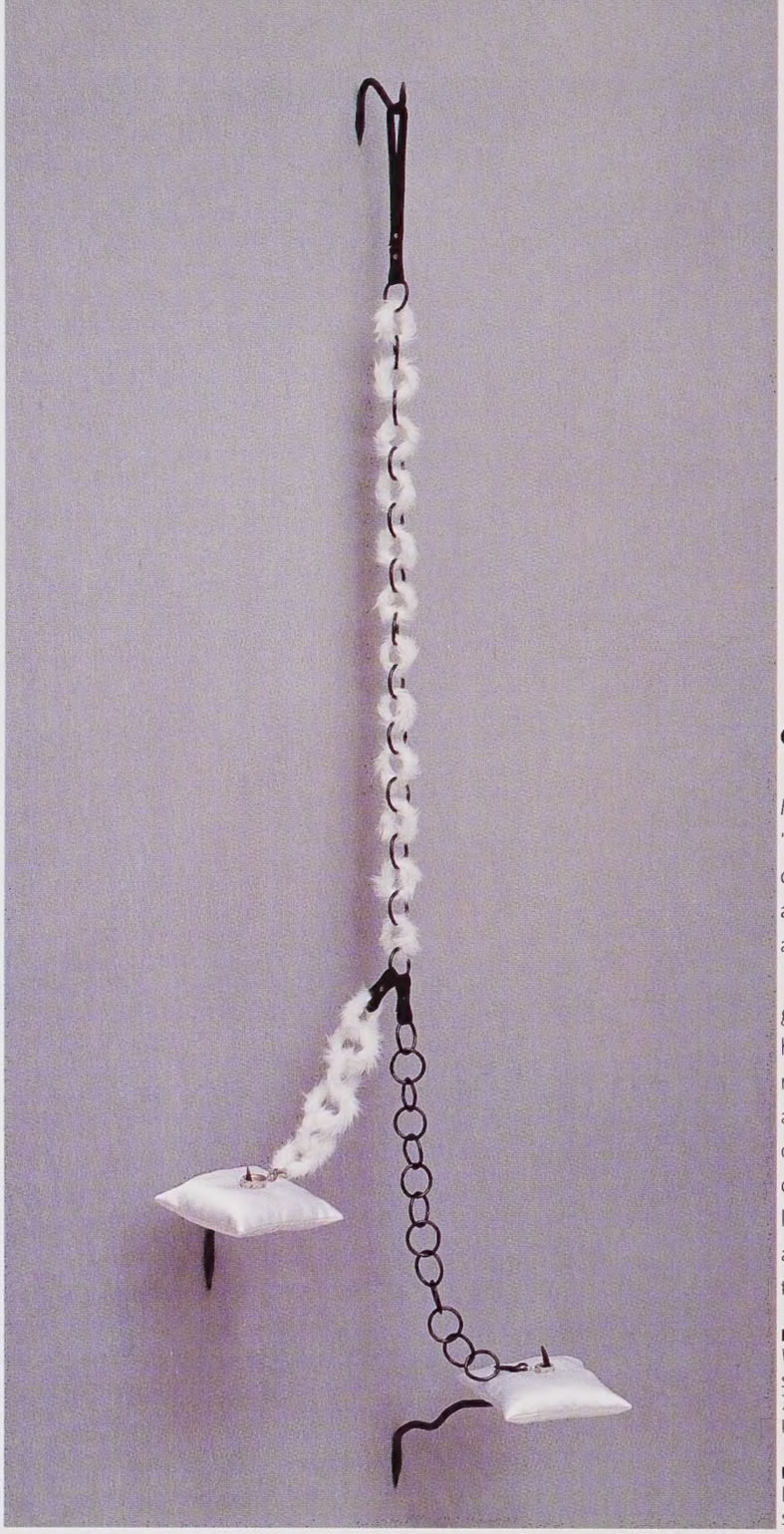


THELMA COLES b. 1952

I am intrigued by jewelry and objects that have a personal significance and serve as visual reminders. When you open a locket, you open memory and association; along with that, a smile, satisfaction, a sense of belonging and purpose. My linear wall pieces use this quality. They also explore my interest in the psychological, in the interaction of the mind, the emotions, and the body. The stages of life are continual, unyielding, and keep flowing at you. . . . *With the Flow* reminds us to accept the rhythm and movement of life.

What does a metalsmith background bring to the sculpture? It brings a passion for detail, a use of subtlety, a sense of intimacy, a concern for physical properties and appearances, and a commitment of execution and form.

left
. . . *With the Flow*, 1997
brass, chain
magnet wire
35 x 15 x 5 1/4"
Photograph by Sandy Wilson



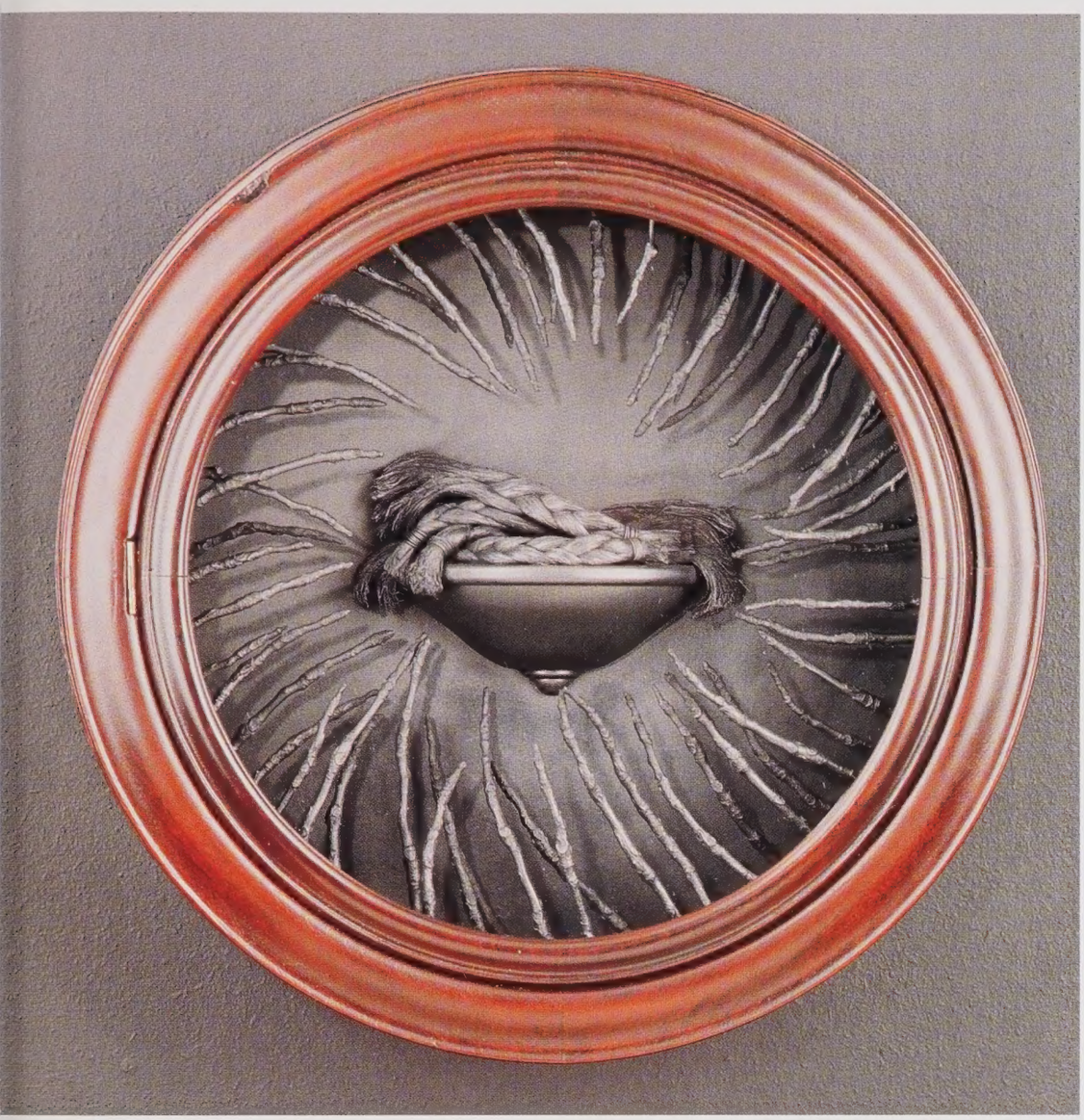
COLLEEN FLANIGAN b. 1971

Marcy and Christian met while walking their dogs, Nilla Puff, a Maltese, and Rexus, a Pinscher. Every day Marcy and Christian would "meet" again while hiking the mountain with their different dogs. The dogs get closer. Marcy grows tired of waiting and asks Christian out on a date. Where would they be today without Nilla Puff and Rexus? Marcy and Christian owe them their hearts.

The dogs participate in the wedding ceremony. For the bride and groom I make wedding rings mimicking their dogs' collars. Marcy's ring has spikes set into a light blue concrete, while Christian's has colored rhinestones in a fair yellow shade. Concrete says durable to me, as well as sidewalk. I like the implication of permanence with the possibility of chipping out—how everlasting is their bond? The rings hang from a divided leash made of steel and links of fake fur. Together the rings and leashes are personality portraits for the partners. Marcy is aggressive and needs room to roam. Christian is a bit fluffy and not too adventurous. Together they prevent each other from becoming too extreme.

left
Wedding Rings: A Gift for Marcy and Christian, 1997
steel, fake fur, silver, satin, concrete, leather, rhinestones
77 x 20 x 17"
Photographs by Bill Bachhuber

below
Detail
size 7 ring, silver, steel, concrete, satin



MARTHA GLOWACKI b. 1950

For the last few years, I have made sculpture that concerns human understanding of the natural world in two areas of inquiry. One is the history of science and of scientific illustration, including public and private collections of natural history specimens. The other is the development of my own symbolism of death and rebirth expressed through images taken from nature. *From the Book of Secrets: Passage* is one of several works made after my father's death. My intent is to use beauty in the creation of art to better understand and express my own feelings about the transience of life. I would hope this sculpture touches on universal human feelings as well.

I recently came across a French word, *bricoleur*, which perfectly expresses my approach to techniques and materials. A *bricoleur* uses whatever comes to hand to suit the current need. I am a packrat and a scrounger. My studio is overfilled (along with my attic, my garden shed, my backyard) with salvage parts in wood and metal, with old glass and furniture, and so on. I come up with an idea for a piece (sometimes inspired partly by a new salvage find) and then root through my stuff looking for appropriate parts. The wood case in *From the Book of Secrets: Passage* is made from an old foundry pattern and a door from a tall case clock; the hair is made from fine copper wire that I have had for years; the sticks are from hickory trees in our woods. Whatever parts I don't have I fabricate.

above
From the Book of Secrets: Passage, 1997
wood, glass, copper, graphite
17 x 17 x 5"
Photographs by Jim Wildeman

left
Detail

RICHARD MAFONG b. 1942

My works are influenced by my ethnic background, my travels, and my life experience. I am also influenced by the study of historical objects and techniques. *Executive Woman's Blouse* is from a series of relief objects in metal trompe l'oeil, using repoussé, chasing, and engraving. The series is inspired by Spanish Colonial religious figures and reliquaries (dating from the sixteenth through the nineteenth century) in which human anatomy and garments were depicted in repoussed silver. Often the figures were decorated with semi-precious stones and other embellishments.

Here the garment appears in an open gift box. It is displayed on brass foil tissue paper hand embossed with the logo of my signature, representing me as the designer and manufacturer of the object.

above
Executive Woman's Blouse, 1996
silver, brass
22 x 16 x 4"
Photograph by Bart Kasten

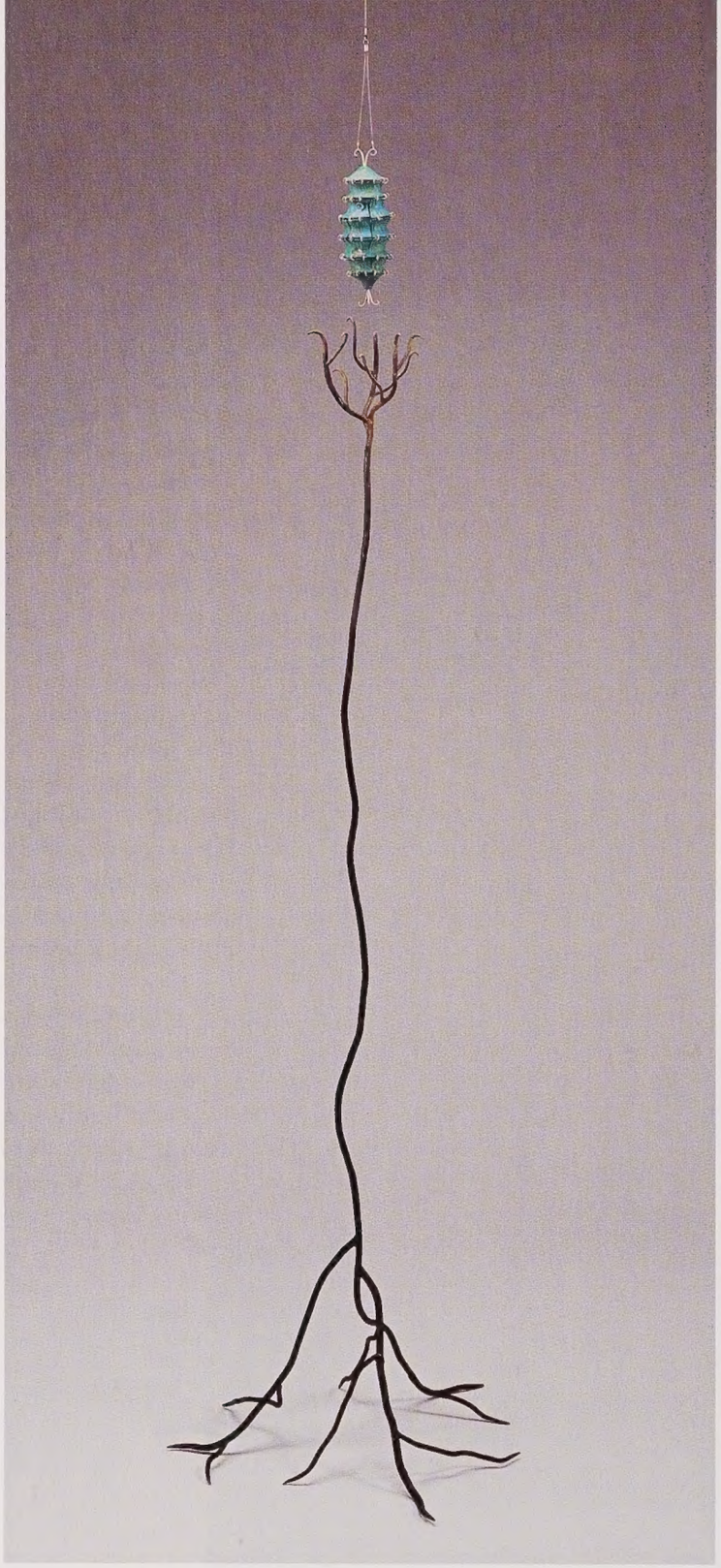
CHRIS RAMSAY b. 1961

I begin with objects that I have collected in flea markets or found on walks. The materials can be both manmade and natural, and are often aged or eroded in some way: to me, the evidence of change. *A World View: Birds* began from my collecting early twentieth-century stereoscopic images of birds. I fabricated a viewing station for several of the cards—a wire sphere in the shape of a globe, with an eyepiece so that the viewer can look inside. By pressing a button, you can illuminate the interior of the globe, and the dual images of the stereocard converge to create a three-dimensional image. Also, you can rotate other images from the collection in and out of the stereoscope by means of a hinged door.

As an artist I am concerned with the subtle, yet dramatic relationship between all components in our environment. I integrate collected objects into my work as a metaphor for the cycle of change that drives our world. Through my work, I consider my place on earth and my part in nature.

left
A World View: Birds, 1998
steel, brass, bronze, wood, internal light, ceramic birds, early 20th-century stereocards
27 x 17 x 17"
Photographs by Chris Ramsay

below
Detail



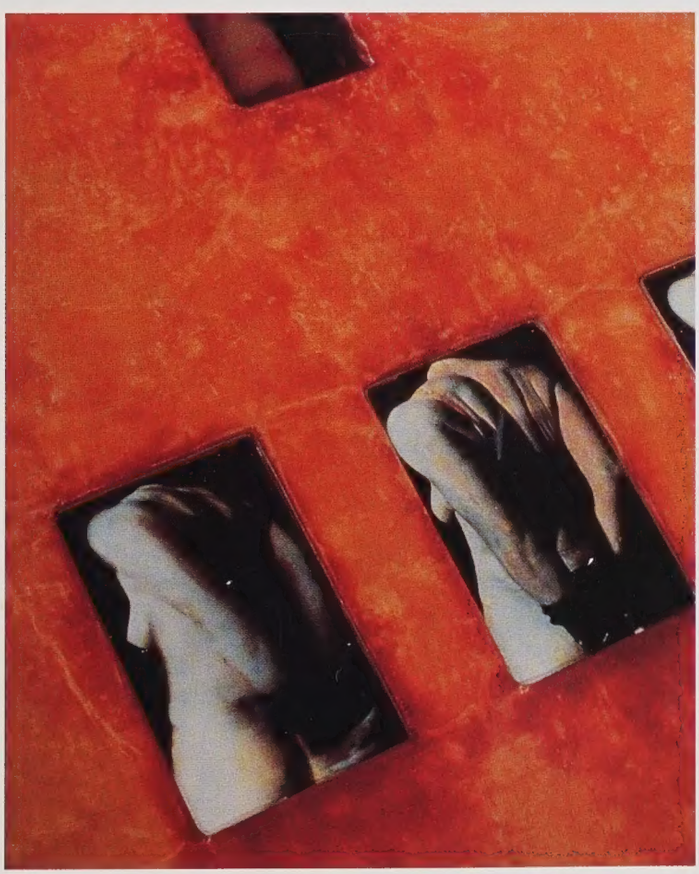
KATRINA KING b. 1973

The genesis of this work is the idea of the open door, combined with the symbol of the food-bearing plant. I am intrigued by notions of containment and secrecy. To me the door stands for the ability to ask any question about myself, my family, my endeavors, and life itself. The organic forms represent abundance and the cycle of growth and change. *Soul Sister* is one of six objects displayed in a row, each suspended over a root-like base. Their form suggests fruit and vegetables; they are metaphors of transformation, nourishment, and knowledge.

Stories of Access is based on profound experiences in my life that have consumed and transformed me.

left
Soul Sister, from Stories of Access, 1998
steel, paper, sterling, copper, oil paint
metal base: 55" h.
Photographs by Bill Bachhuber

below
Detail
8 x 2 x 2"



LIN STANIONIS b. 1954

This sculpture is one of a group that explores the body: its fragility, its vulnerability, and its mortality. My work relies on the notion that the body is central to experience and that all connections between the physical and spiritual reside there.

I develop and explore these ideas through a series of works best described as vestiges. These works speak to the elusiveness of something lost and, at the same time, suggest a biological link to the primary organism that is self-sustaining and complete within itself. This work is built with an encaustic skin over wood; other works use cast concrete or lead. The conflicting sensuality of form and material gives credence to the confluence of physicality and spirituality, thus suggesting the actuality of experience.

above
Untitled, 1996
encaustic skin over wood, photographs
24 x 28 x 108"
Photographs by Jim Freeman

left
Detail

JONATHAN WAHL b. 1968

My work is an investigation of America through its traditional icons, based on the potency of functional objects and their value systems. The tinware objects in the *American Heritage Series* enabled the settlement of this country, its physical establishment, but also its ideological establishment. Early American objects are linked to the political climate of their day, but also to our time.

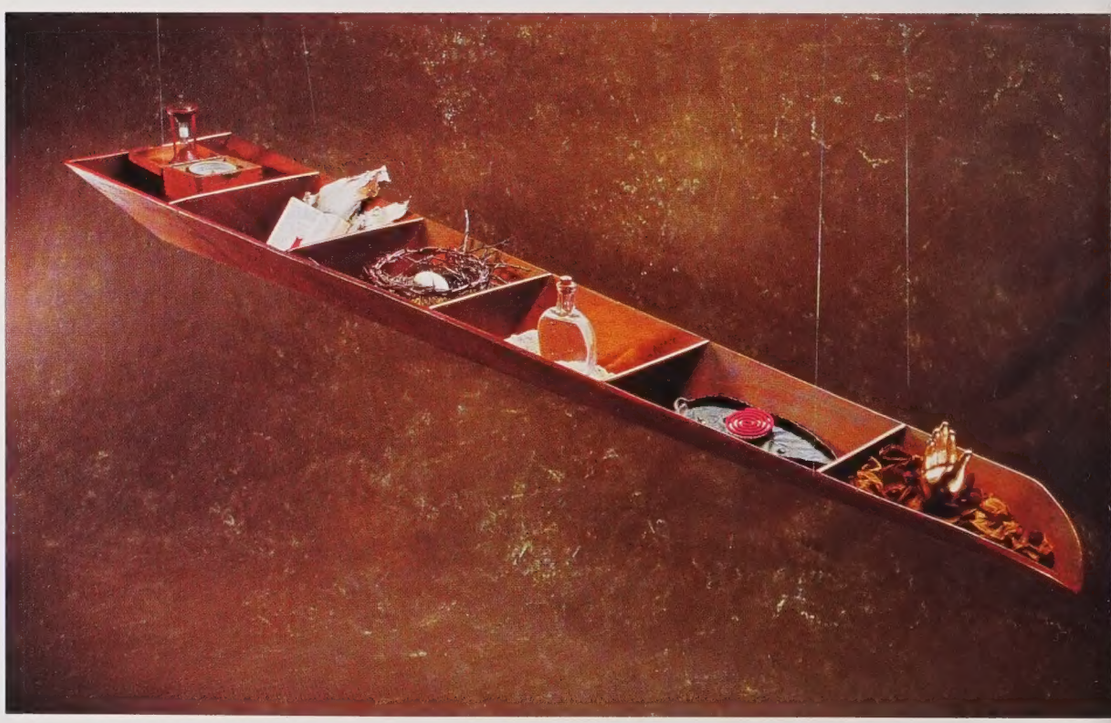
Tinware is based in the language of function and decoration. In this series, I shift the scale from single and intimate to multiple and monumental, forcing the viewer to come to terms with the icons on a sculptural scale. Their enlargement and repetition also create another mood in the work, relative to our current cultural condition. They overdo the idea of function and decoration, as if to proclaim: "Notice me, and see how I do this even better now."

left
American Heritage Series II, 1997
steel, tin, paint
72 x 16 x 16" each
Photograph by Peter Meretsky

JANICE KLUGE b. 1952

This piece is composed of found objects or objects given to me. I have added gold leaf or paint, so that everything appears to be made with metalsmithing techniques but is not. The boat is dedicated to my sister Linda, whose death in 1996 sent me searching for meaning in the religions of the world, primarily in Buddhist doctrine, through such works as *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. Some of the concepts from those readings are presented here as *yanas* (the rafts of ferries for carrying people across life's river), *annica* (impermanence), *koan* (a surreal problem), and *tantra* (the inter-relatedness of things: sounds, sights, smells and movement).

right
Spirit Boat, 1997
found objects, rose petals, stone, sand, water
gold leaf, paint, with sound installation
10 H x 12 x 60"
Photograph by Lee Isaacs



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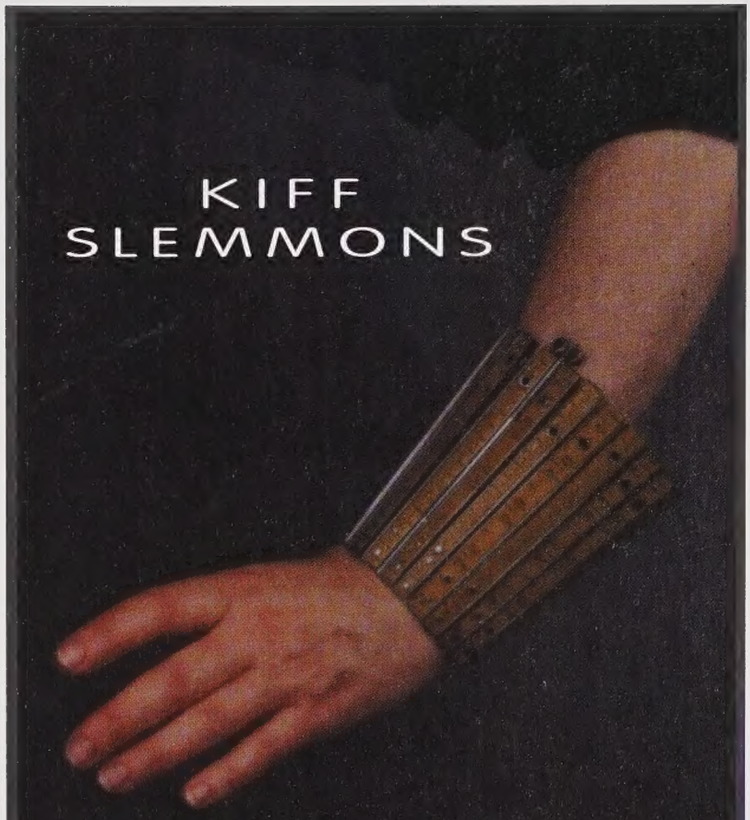

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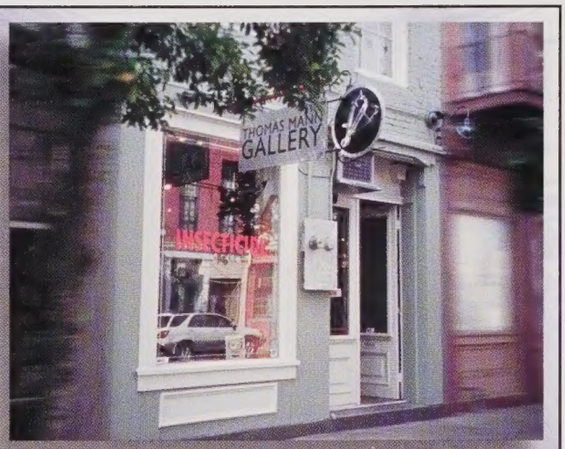

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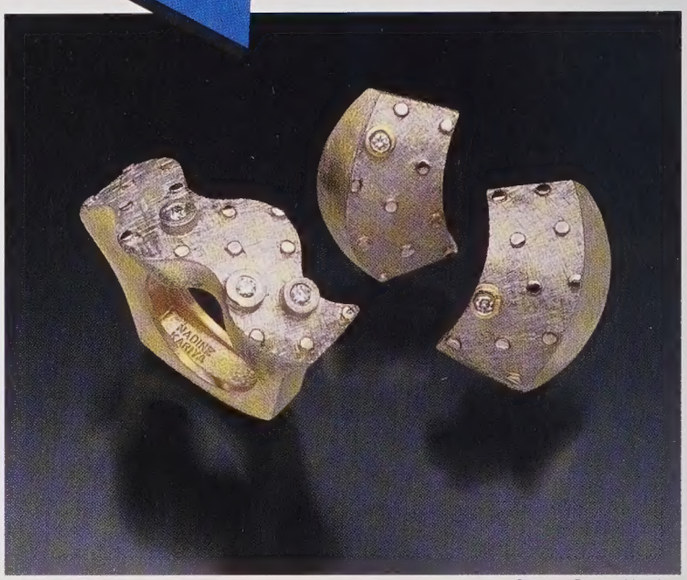

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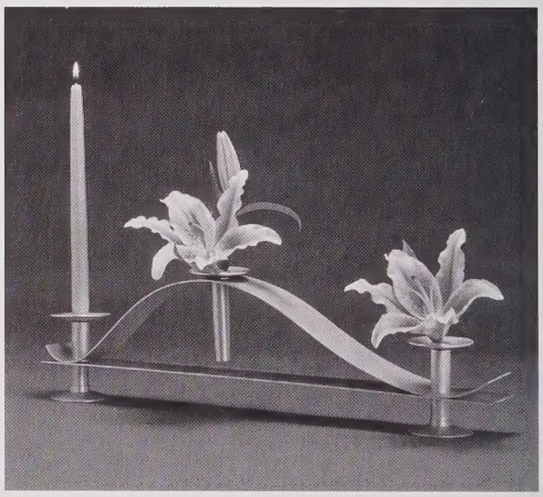

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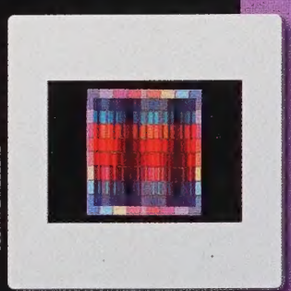

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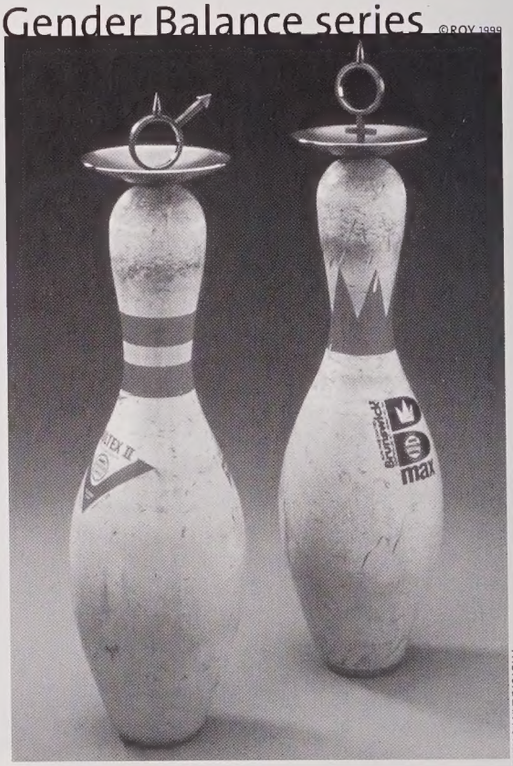
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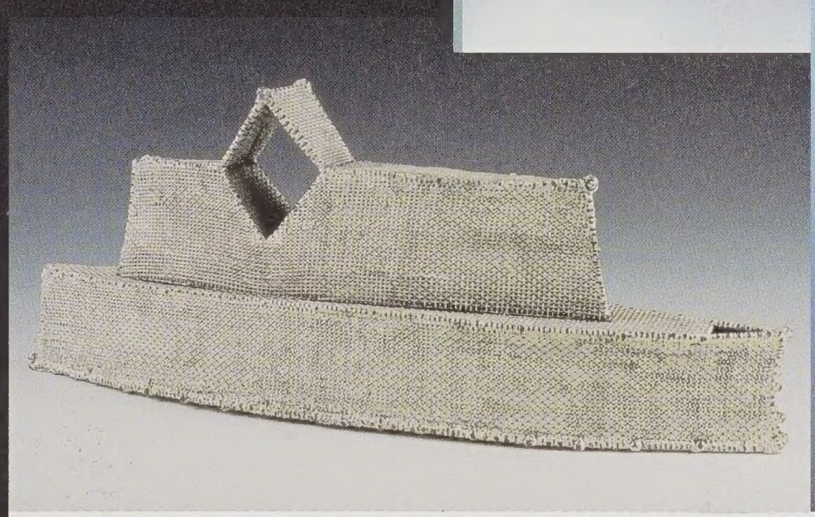

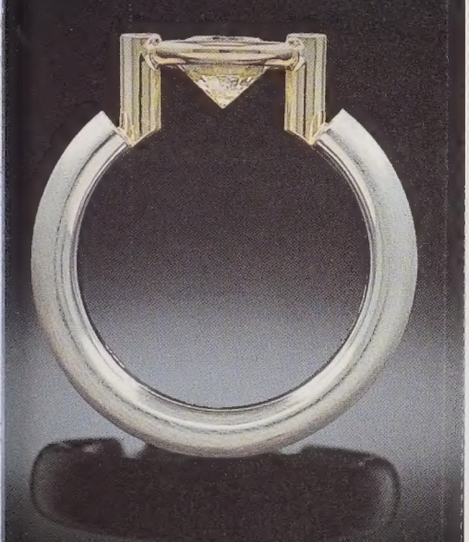

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Biba Schutz
Circum Pendant, 1996
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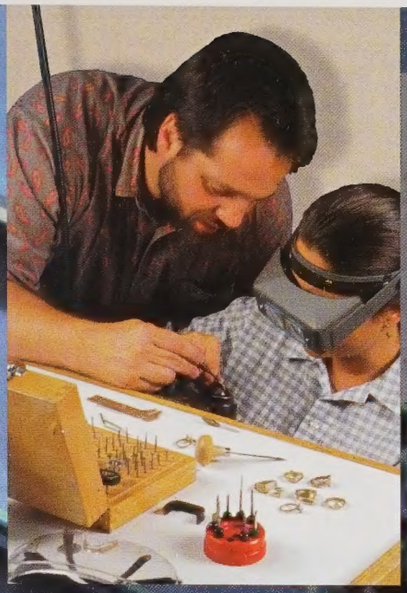
4 1/3 x 1 1/3 x 1 1/3"

Billie Jean Theide
Butte #EF-8 (teapot), 1997
bronze, electroformed copper, enamel, patina
4 1/4 x 10 x 12 1/2"
photograph by Billie Jean Theide

Whitney Boin
Post Engagement Ring, 1996
produced since 1988
platinum, 18k
photograph by Todd Flashner



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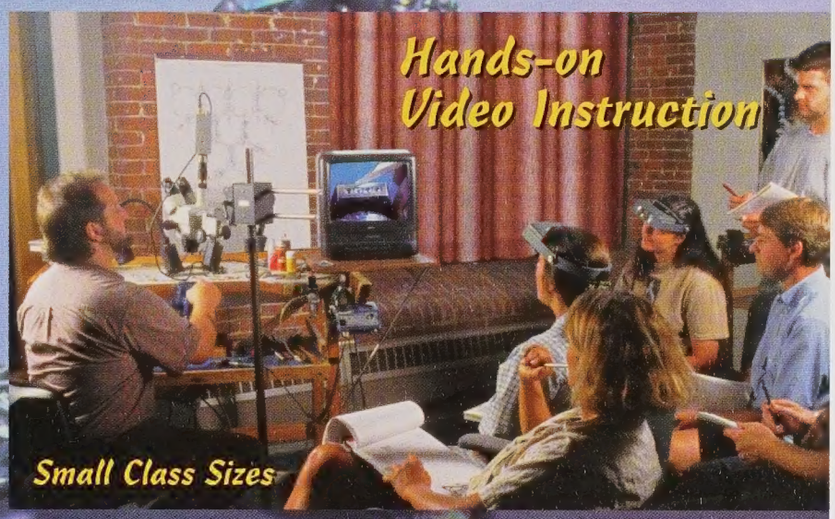

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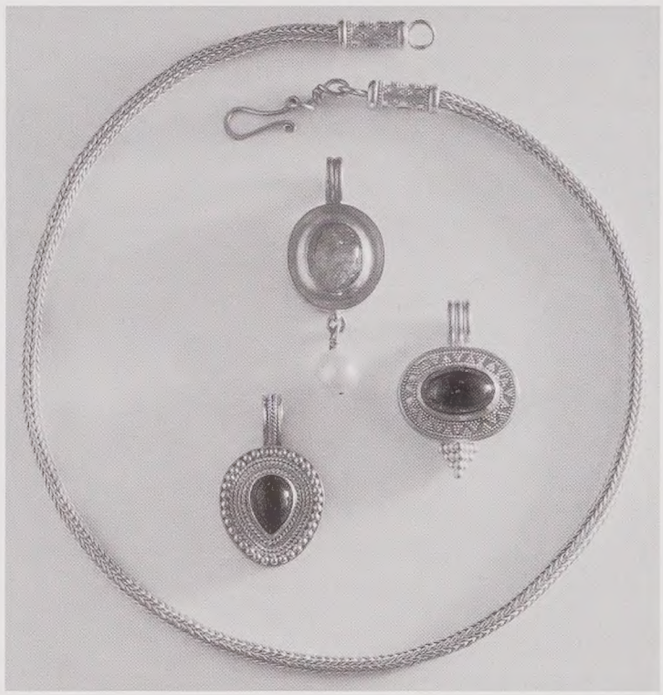

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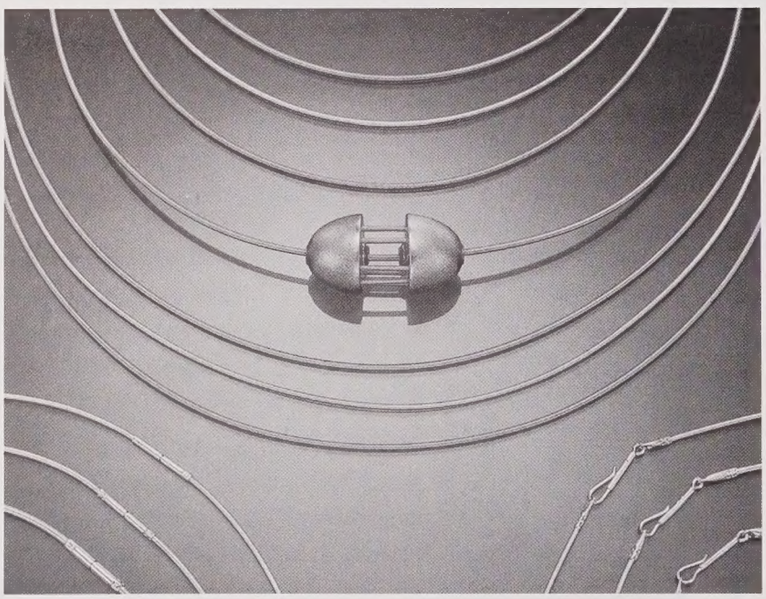

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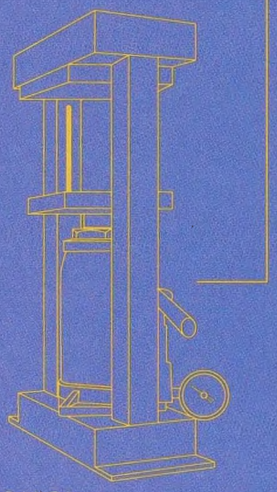
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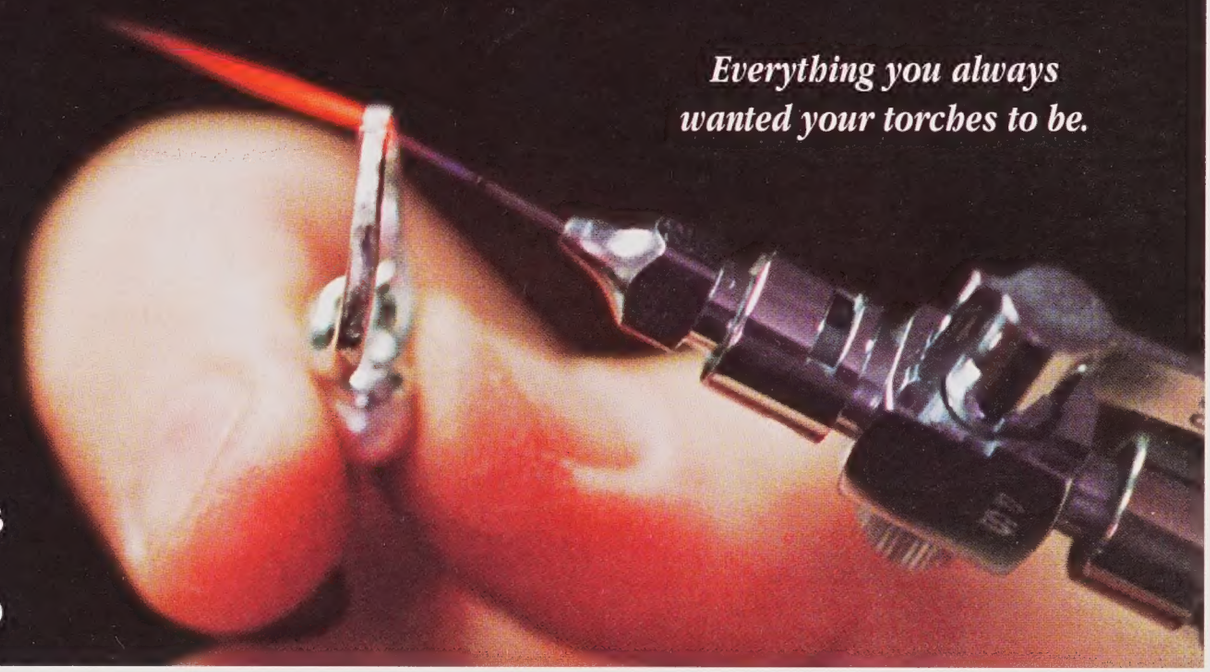

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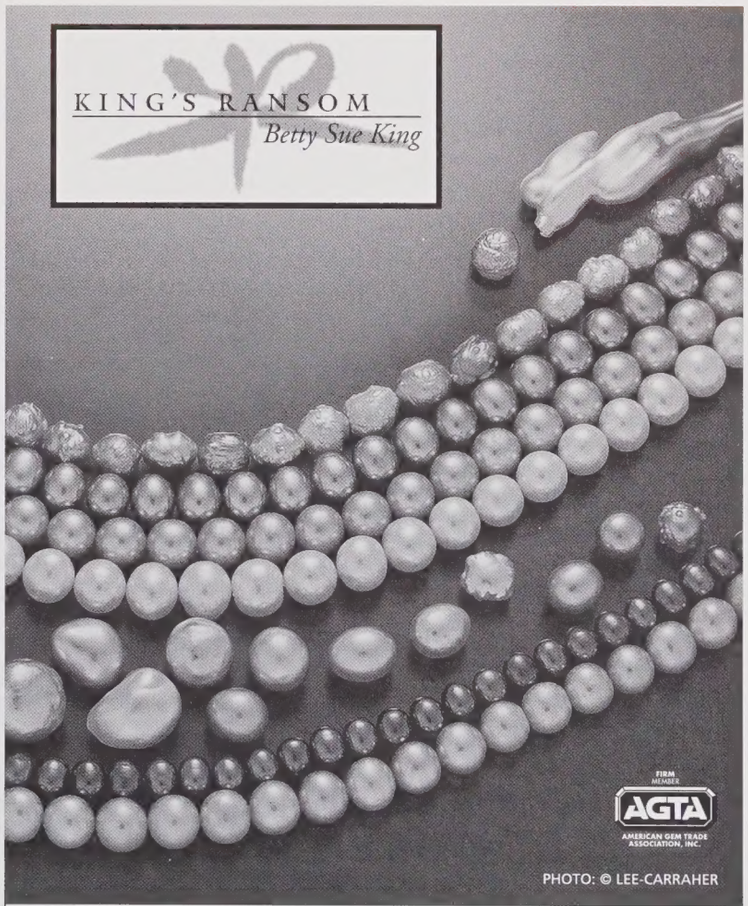

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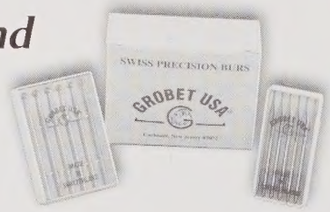

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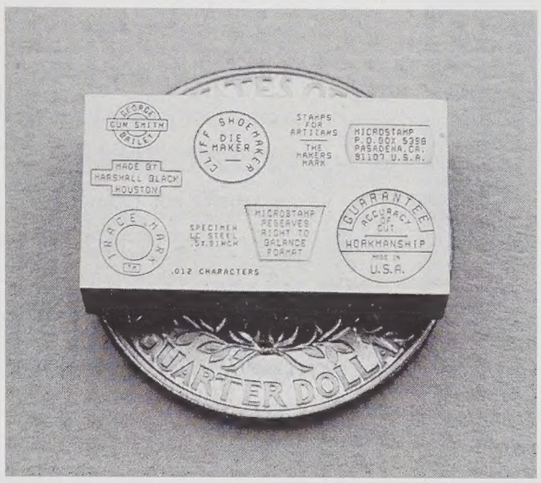

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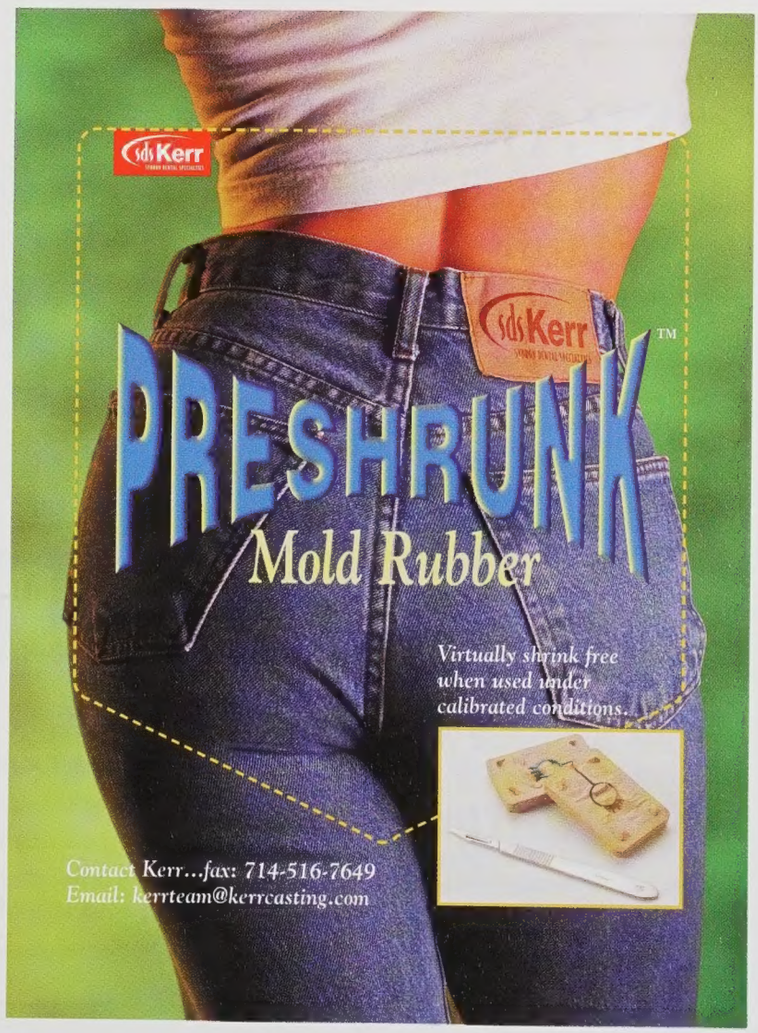

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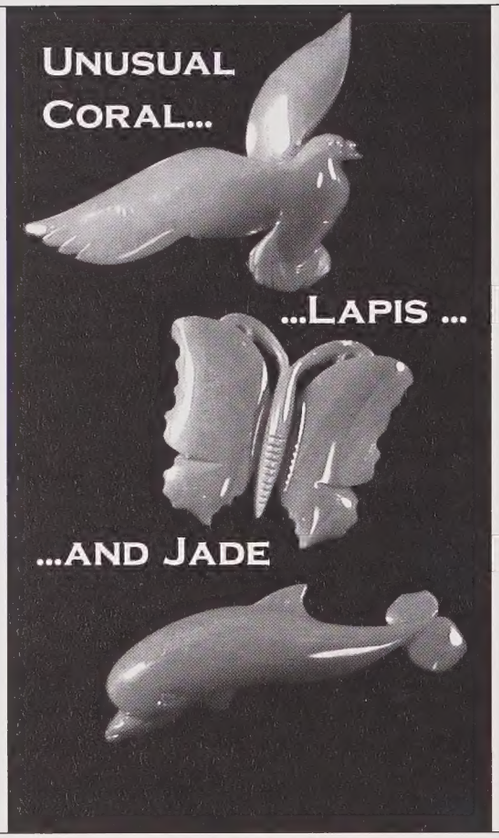

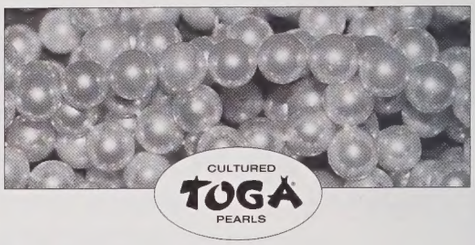

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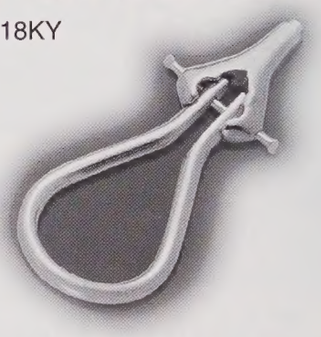

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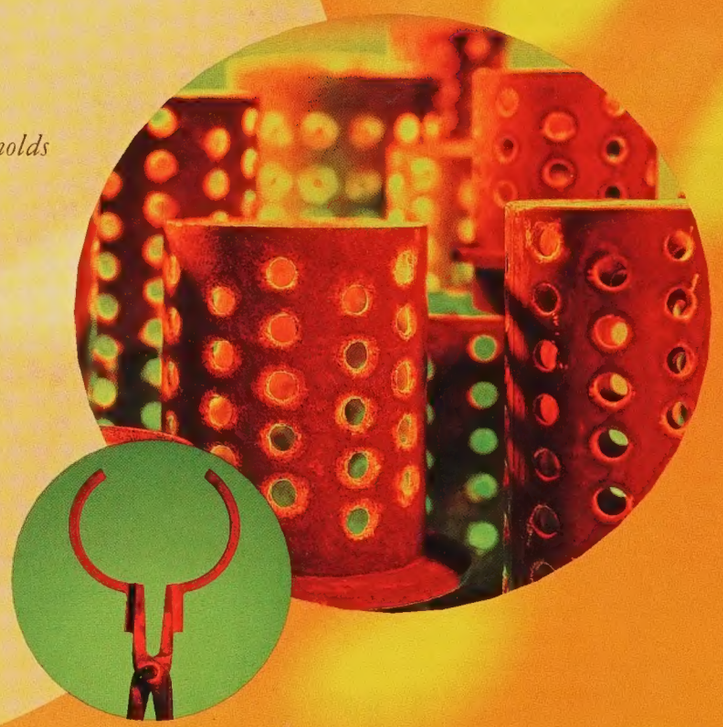

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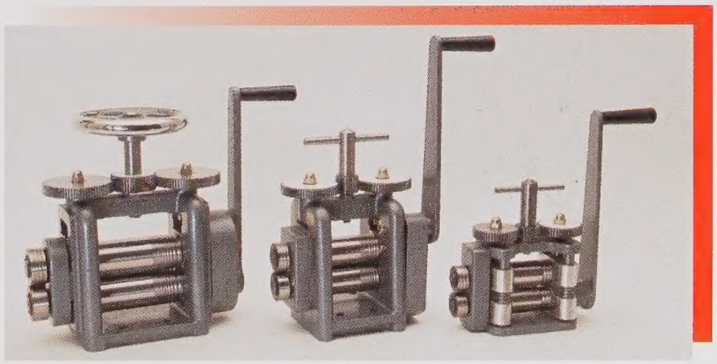

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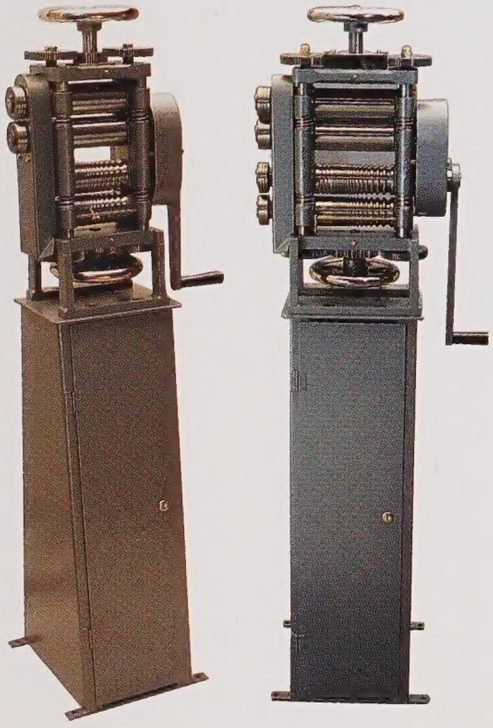

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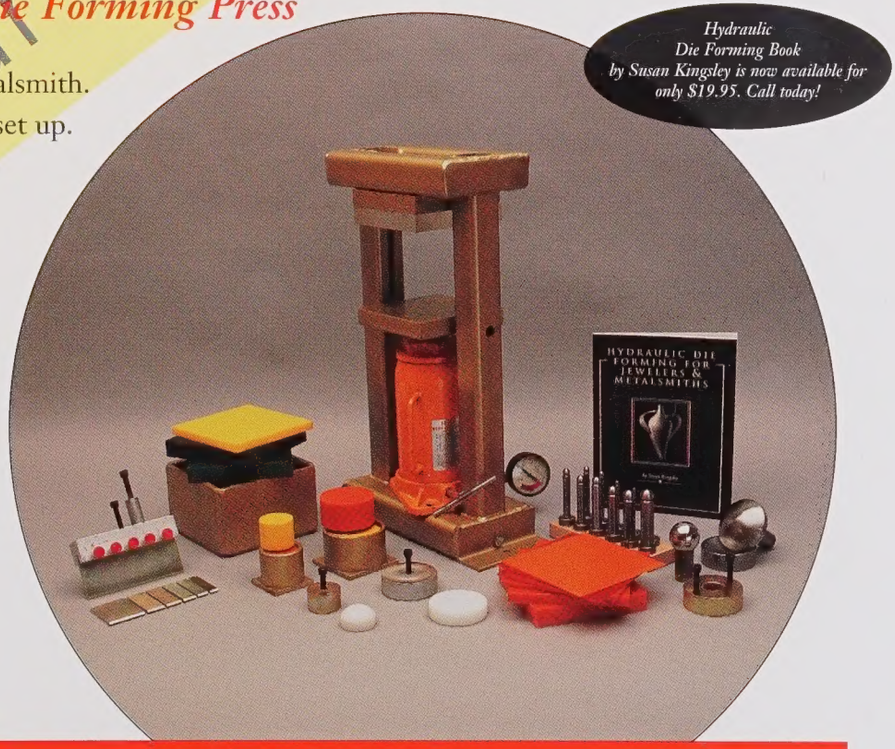

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